



3266 to 14
AN
EXPOSITION
OF THE EPISTLE
OF SAINT PAUL TO THE
COLOSSIANS, Delivered in
undry Sermons.

BY
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The third Edition, corrected and revised.

1 Cor 12. 4.

There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit.

1 Cor. 12. 7.

*The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every
man to profit withall.*

LONDON

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**TO THE RIGHT
WORSHIPFULL HIS VERY GOOD**

Patron, ROWLAND TRAPS, Esquire, the Authour
willeth all true happinesse, both temporall and
eternall in the Lord Iesus.



Considering with my selfe (Right
Worshipfull) how much I am
bound to glorifie God, to whom I
owe my selfe and all whatsoever I
am : and that in speciall sort I am
bound to seeke the advancement
of his Name in that holy calling
and service, wherewith he hath ho-
noured me, (the unworthiest of all other,) in good to his
Church, and especially to those over whom he set me, as
a guide to direct and conduct in the way that leads to eter-
nall blisse and glory ; and considering withall mine owne
weaknesse & inability (more than ordinary in other men)
to answer that duty incumbent and lying upon me ; I have
beene moved, (being thereunto often and earnestly im-
portuned by many, by whose motion, the Lord seeme to
require it at my hands) to send forth this part of my poore
labours, to the view of all that shall please to looke upon
it, and to imploy that talent the Lord hath trusted mee
withall, to the greatest advantage that I can, and to use the
best meanes I am able, of furthering the good of Gods
Church, and hereby in some measure to make supply of
that which (through my knowne debility of body) is
wanting in the discharge of Pastorall function : and how-
soever these my poore labours be not worthy the view of
the learned and judicious, being simple, plaine, and po-
pular both for matter and manner, yet (I hope) they are
found

The Epistle Dedicatory.

found & without corruption, and will not be unprofitable to the simple and honest hearted, who want those special endowments and learning, and depth of judgement, and yet are desirous to bee informed in the mystery of godliness, to their saving comfort: and especially to those that are of my charge, whose profit in holy things, I chiefly tender, and to whom my labours are most familiar, and principally due. It grieves not me now againe, to recommend to their eyes the things which heretofore have beene sent by their cares to their minds, and (I hope) to their hearts; and though I cannot precisely say as the Apostle *Peter* did, I know that the time is at hand that I must lay downe mine earthly tabernacle: yet that time being uncertaine, and having had many times warning to bethinke my selfe of my uncertaine continuance in this life, having sometimes received the sentence of death in my selfe, that I should not trust in my selfe, but in God, who raiseth the dead; I thinke it meet as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stirre them up by putting them in remembrance, and to endeavour that they may be able to have remembrance of these things after my departing.

1 Cor. 1. 9.

2 Pet. 1. 13, 15.

2 Pet. 3. 16.
18. 31.

In the Epistles of the blessed Apostle *Paul*, and in this, written to the *Colossians*, most clearly and plainly men may see, and heare what the Lord saith to his Church, and what he requireth at the hands of all Christians, both for the matter of faith, and of practise, and that both in generall, and in particular duties: yet in reading this and other Scriptures, it is not safe to goe alone, (unlearned and unstable soules, pervert something in them to their owne destruction) a guide (as the Eunuch confessed) is of necessary use. I have therefore by these my poore labours, shewed my selfe willing to bee helpfull unto such as stand in need of direction, and want better guides; and I have endeavoured to point out the way, whereby they may come to some measure of right understanding and saving knowledge of that holy and heavenly truth that is revealed in this divine Epistle. And my earnest desire is, that the readers (whosoever) would bring to the reading of these my slender



The Epistle Dedicatory.

flender paines, humble and teachable hearts, and such as are plyable to the truth: and that they would lay aside all prejudicate and forefalled thoughts, and partiall affections, and set themselves both to seeke and to follow the truth in love.

Ephes. 4. 15.

My method is not curious or hidden, but plaine and open, and for the most part one and the same: the simplest Reader endued with any discretion, may observe that the coherence, and parts of the Text being laid forth, the sense and meaning of it is given (wherein I hope the Lord hath directed me, according to my desire, to finde the right) and the doctrines are thence raised, which being cleared and confirmed, and occurrent doubts removed, such use and application is made, as my shallow braine conceived most properly; sorting and suting to the subiect matter in hand: the heads of doctrines and uses, are throw out in the margin. Such as thinke my labours for their use, may please to use them, and finding good by them, let them blesse God for it, and yeeld all praise and glory to him, to whom onely of right it belongs; and such as are otherwise conceited, I intreate to take my good meaning in good part, and to leave them to others, who like better of them, and my selfe to stand or fall to mine owne Master before whose judgement-seate wee must all one day appeare.

Rom. 14. 4. 10.

And now (Right Worshipfull) since it pleased the Lord to make you the meanes of giving mee a comfortable access to my charge (wherein I have exercised my Ministry this tenth yeeres and upwards) howsoever in much weakenesse, yet the Lord vouchsafing strength, above and beyond mine owne expectation, and the conceit of others, for which (as I am ever bound to praise the Name of the Lord) I doe freely, and thankfully acknowledge your undeserved love and favour towards me therein, and resting assuredly upon the continuance of your wonted love and kindnesse to mee ward, I make bold to shelter these my poore labours (being part of my paines taken in my charge) under your name and Patronage;

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Patronage; I doubt not but as I my selfe have found you a kind and friendly Patron, so these my labours comming unto you submissively (as they doe) shall finde your favourable countenance towards them, and you will be pleased to vouchsafe them your best protection. Accept (I pray you) this poore mite I now tender unto you, in stead of some rich pledge of my unfained love and thankfulness. I doe heartily wish, and earnestly desire of the Lord, that as you have beene the meanes (in some sort) of the being of these labours of mine, so they may returne unto you in way of thankfulness, some spirituall good, which I hope, they shall, the Lord blessing your carefull and frequent perusal of them.

Thus being loth to be tedious and troublesome unto you, I commend this silly present to your favourable acceptance, and your selfe, to the gracious protection of the Lord, who grant you ever that grace that hath the promise, both of this life, and of that which is to come. So I pray, and will (God willing) not cease to pray for you.

From Bermondsey neere London,
March the sixth. 1614.

Your Worships

to command

in the Lord.



EDWARD ELTON.



AN EXPOSITION OF THE EPISTLE TO THE Colossians, Delivered in cer- taine Sermons.

CHAP. I. VERS. I.

Paul an Apostle of Iesus Christ, by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother.



His Epistle was written by S. Paul, when he was prisoner at Rome. The occasion of the writing of it, was a report brought unto him concerning the estate of the Church at Colosse, that after they of that Church had bene converted by Epaphras to the faith of Christ, and instructed in the truth of religion, according to the doctrine of the Apostles, they were in danger to be seduced by false teachers, raised up by Satan, who sought to impose and thrust upon them the observation of circumcision, and

certain rites of the ceremoniall law abolished by Christ, and to entangle them by many Philosophicall speculations, and to bring in the worship of Angels, and many other sorts of will-worship devised by themselves.

The Apostle hearing of this eminent danger like to fall upon them, was induced to write this Epistle unto them, as an Antidote against peyson, and a remedy against these evils. The summe and substance of this Epistle is thus much: That the Colossians ought to continue constant in the doctrine of faith delivered unto them by Epaphras, and to avoid the corruption of flattering novelties and deceivers, and to loyne to constancy in faith, study, care, and practice of good life; to which purpose he subjoynes many exhortations both general and speciall.

The materiall parts of this Epistle, besides the *Preamble* and the *Conclusion*, are two. The first is concerning Christian doctrine in the two first Chapters. The second, touching Christian life and conversation in the two Chapters following. And so much bee spoken of the generall resolution of this Epistle.

The generall resolution of this Epistle. The time and place when this Epistle was written. The occasion of the writing of this Epistle.

The summe and substance of this Epistle.

The division of this Epistle.

The summe
and division
of the first
Chapter.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

The argument
and subdivisi-
on of the first
part.

Paul described
by his office.

Doff. 1.

Every true
teacher is able
to shew his
commission.

And to omit further sub-division. This first Chapter containes foure parts; The first is a comprehension of such things as are permitted in the first and second verse. The second is the Proeme or entrance standing on a congratulation and comprecation from the third verse to the twelfth. The third is a summary declaration of the doctrine of Christian faith, from the 13 verse to the 23. The fourth is an exhortation to a constant continuance in that doctrine, from the 23 verse to the end of the Chapter. And so much of the first Chapter in generall.

Touching the first part containing things permitted, therein is offered to our consideration the sender of this Epistle, the parties to whom it was sent, and the salutation of them. The sender in the first verse, *Paul*, who joyneth to himselfe *Timothy* a brother. And hee describeth himselfe by his office and the efficient cause of it, that he was an *Apostle*, and designed to that office by the will of God. The parties to whom it was sent are set downe in the second verse, namely the *Colossians*, who are set out by three epithites, *Saints*, *faithfull*, *brethren*, and all these in *Christ*, then followeth the salutation in the last words wherein the *Apostle* wisheth and prayeth for two things to be given: *Grace*, and *peace*, and both these from God the fountaine of all good things, and from him as he his our father in *Christ*, and from the Lord *Iesus Christ* the mediatur, by whom all good things come. And so much bee spoken in generall of the first part of this Chapter. Come we now to speake of the first verse of this Chapter.

Paul an Apostle) The word *Apostle* in generall acception signifies one sent as a messenger, in the new Testament with this addition (*of Iesus Christ*) it signifies more specially one called immediately by *Christ* to preach the Gospel, and by him sent to the whole world without limitation, and to that end furnished with understanding and knowledge of the Gospel, and doctrine of salvation, immediately by the inspiration & revelation from the spirit of *Christ*. Having infallible assistance and testimony of the holy Ghost that he cannot erre in executing his Apostolicall office, and having also the gift of working miracles, of conferring the holy Ghost by laying on of hands, and of correction, as *Peter* corrected *Ananias* & *Sapphira*. *Act. 5*. The meaning then of *Paul* in saying an *Apostle of Iesus Christ*, is this, that hee was thus called to be an *Apostle* thus furnished, and had this assistance, testimony, and power by the will of God (that is, by the eternall counsell and purpose of God, who (as he saith, *Gal. 1. 17*) separated him from his mothers wombe. The words then are thus to be understood, that *Paul* was immediately called by *Christ* to the office of an *Apostle*, and sent by him to preach the Gospel to the whole world, and to that end furnished with knowledge of the doctrine of salvation, by immediate inspiration of the spirit of *Christ*, with the infallible assistance of the spirit, and designed to that office by the eternall counsell and purpose of God. Come we to the doctrine.

First, it is to be marked that *Paul* here stands upon his office and calling, that he is an *Apostle* immediately called and sent, and this he doth almost in the beginning of every one of his Epistles, to put a difference betweene himselfe and false Apostles; whence only note we thus much, that all true teachers are able to shew their commission that they are lawfully called and sent to preach, that they have both the inward and outward lawfull calling. *Christ* himselfe tooke not on him the office of *Mediatour*, nor the office and honour to bee made the high Priest, but as he was called to it of his father, *Heb. 5. 5*. Much lesse ought any to take on him the office of a publique teacher without lawfull calling. And therefore it is Anabaptistical to think that any man that wil, may preach without speciall calling. A word is sufficient of that poynt. In that *Paul* was an *Apostle of Iesus Christ*, one immediately called and sent by him to preach the Gospel, it followeth upon this necessarily, that his doctrine delivered in this and in his other Epistles is heavenly, and is to be embraced, beleaved, and followed as the doctrine of *Christ Iesus*. For why? his doctrine being given by inspiration



Inspiration of the spirit of Christ both for matter and manner, he teaching as he was acted and moved by infallible assistance of the spirit of Christ, it must needs be the undoubted oracle and immediate word of Christ, and so bee received. *Paul* therefore gives thanks to God on the behalfe of the *Thessalonians*, 1 *Thes.* 2. 13, that they received of him and other Apostles the word of the preaching of God, not as the word of men, but as it was indeed the word of God.

Obiect. Some may say, *Paul* spake and delivered some things in writing not given by inspiration of the spirit of Christ, but of himselfe, as he saith, to the remnant I speake, and not the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 7. 12. and therefore some things recorded in the Epistles of *Paul* are not to be received as the word of Christ.

Answer. The meaning of that place alleaged is, that the Lord had not given any such expresse commandement as *Paul* there delivered, but he by collection and interpretation of the Scripture did gather it, and so speake not of himselfe, but by the assistance of the spirit of God, as we finde in the 40 verse of that Chapter, and so notwithstanding that, it remaines a truth, that the doctrine of *Paul* and of the other Apostles of Christ is heavenly, and simply to bee beleaved and obeyed as the doctrine of Iesus Christ.

This may strengthen us against the poyson of all other doctrines, either contrary or differing from the doctrine of the Apostles, and teach us to hold them within compasse of the Apostles owne censure of *Anathema*. If any man or Angel preach otherwise, then that which wee have preached unto you, hold and adudge him accursed. *Gal.* 1. 8. 9. and let this arme us against all the devised doctrines of the Church of Rome, for let that Church prove unto us, that their teachers have Apostolicall power and authority, the same that the Apostles of Christ had, and the infallible assistance of the spirit of Christ in that they teach, differing from the doctrine of the Apostles, and then we shall have some reason to condescend to their opinions, and to receive their unwritten traditions: but if that be a privilege and prerogative belonging only to the Apostles, the planters and first founders of the Church of the new Testament, and not descending and passing by succession to any other (as indeed it is) surely then we cannot hold their ordinances and traditions, being (at the least) divers from the constitutions of the Apostles, or any other thing then meere inventions of their owne braines.

But they reply and plead for themselves, that their traditions and ordinances are not to be taxed as meere inventions of men, because they are not ordained by meere humane power, but by Christ his warrant and authority, by such as are placed over his Church, of whom Christ saith, *He that beareth you, beareth me*, *Luke* 10. 16. so that their traditions and ordinances are not appointed by meere humane power, but by the holy Ghost loyning with the teachers in the regiment of the faithfull. A faire colour and gilding set upon a rotten post.

To answer them and their allegation, (*He that beareth you, beareth me, &c.*) It is true indeed that hee that heareth the Apostles, and such as follow them in the office of teaching, the pastors and teachers of the new Testament heareth Christ, but how? Surely so long as they teach nothing but that Christ hath taught. Christ hath not assured us that whosoever heareth men (though called to teach) heareth him simply whatsoever men teach; but so long as men preach Gods word, and doctrine thence grounded, and that appeares, *Ioh.* 14. 26. *The Comforter* (saith Christ) *which is the holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, which I have told you.* There Christ promisseth his spirit shall suggest and bring all things to the minds of his Apostles and their followers which he had taught them, not any new doctrines or revelations; they then that speak any thing of their owne contrary or divers from the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles in the new Testament, falsely pretend the holy Ghost; and let the Church of Rome see what glossesoever they can upon their unwritten traditions, they cannot free them

Objection.

Answer.

Vse 1.

The teachers of the Church of Rome can shew no warrant for their calling.

Objection.

Answer.

from being found meere humane inventions, and their worship built upon them, unreasonable and foolish: for devised worship must needs taste of the vessel whence it came, the braine of man, full of ignorance and folly in matters concerning God and his worship.

Vse 2.
All reverence
is due to the
doctrine of the
true ministers
of the Gospell.

As we are to avoid doctrine contrary and dissenting from the doctrine of the Apostles, and to hold it accursed; so are we to yeeld reverence, faith and obedience to the doctrine of the Apostle *Paul*, and to whatsoever is taught agreeable to the same, as to the doctrine of Iesus Christ, as if Christ should speak immediately from heaven: for the Ministers of the Gospell being the Ambassadors of Christ, and speaking in his stead as we have it, *2 Cor. 5. 10.* and being faithfull and delivering nothing but the revealed will of Christ, are to be heard as their Lord and Master Christ Iesus, whose messengers & Ambassadors they are.

Question.

Quest. It is not the letter but the sense and meaning of the holy Ghost in the writings of the Apostles that is to be heard and received, as the doctrine of Christ now, as *S. Peter* hath told us, *2 Pet. 3. 16.* in the Epistles of *Paul* some things are hard to be understood, and there is difference of expositions of the writings of the Apostles; how then shall wee that are unlearned know what doctrine is agreeable to the true meaning of the holy Ghost, in the writings of the Apostles?

Answer.

I answer first in generall, as one doth in a like case unto the Papists, obiecting that the Scripture is hard, and therefore to be kept from the vulgar and common sort; though many things in the Epistles of *Paul* be hard, yet the way and meanes to come to the true understanding of them, is to reade and heare them diligently, to marke them attentively, to pray heartily, and to iudge humbly. But for more speciall direction, to know what doctrine concluded out of the writings of *Paul* is agreeable to the meaning of the holy Ghost in the same, we must remember two things, which by diligent reading and carefull observation any one may easily finde in the writings of the Apostle. First, that the whole teaching of the Apostle doth runne upon Christ, his whole doctrine, as a structure or house is built on Christ the foundation, as himselfe speaketh, *1 Cor. 3. 11.* no man more advanced the glory of Christ, evincing and proving iustification and salvation in and by him alone, and none more withstood such as preached the law, or intermingled the law with the Gospell in the matter of iustification then he did: *1 Cor. 1. 24. We preach Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.* And chap. 2. 2. *I esteemed so know nothing, save Iesus Christ and him crucified.* And many like sentences we finde in his Epistles, he runs almost in every line upon the name of Christ, and the advancement of his glory.

Note.

The second thing to be remembered is, that in the doctrine of the Apostle concerning the worship and service of God, which wee are to performe in way of thankfullnesse for his mercy, the Apostle doth urge upon us inward holinesse and spirituall worship and service. *Rom. 12. 1. I beseech you brethren by the mercies of God, that ye give up your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable serving of God.* And in this Epistle hee much condemnes externall worship and worshipping of Angels, and commends unto us inward holinesse and spirituall worship. By these two generall things remembered, we may easily discern who expound the writings of the Apostle aright, & derive doctrine from thence consonant to the meaning of the holy Ghost, (namely) they, who with the Apostle preach Christ with all due respect of his glory in the worke of redemption and salvation, and without any impeachment or derogation from him in regard of his kingly, priestly, or Prophetick office, they that teach Christ in all things to have the preheminent, as it is verse 18. of this chapter, and propound spirituall worship and service of God standing in mortification of the flesh, and newnesse of life: and that these are essentiall notes of true doctrine, we finde them laid before us by Saint *Iohn* in his first Epistle, the fourth chapter, in the triall of spirits, in discerning the spirit of truth from the spirit

spirit of error, he teacheth that the doctrine is good, and of God that is founded on Iesus Christ incarnate, and holds the truth of his incarnation. And secondly that propoundeth spirituall worship of God, for (saith he) verf. 5. false teachers and Antichristian spirits are of the world, and speake of the world, they are earthly and carnal. they teach a plausible and pleasing worship fitting the folly and corruption of mans nature, consisting in bodily exercises, rites and ceremonies, things of great estimation and admiration in the world: on the contrary, the teachers and spirits that are of God, even in outward actions of religion require inward heavenly and spirituall worship of God, agreeable to the will and nature of God, standing in true faith of the heart, true contrition of the soule and other fruits of Gods spirit. By these two notes, namely preaching Iesus Christ incarnate, with all due respect of the honour of his name, as the onely King, Priest, and Prophet of his Church, and by propounding spirituall worship of God, wee may easily discover the exposition and doctrine concluded from the writings of the Apostle, which is most agreeable to the meaning of the holy Ghost in these writings, and having found the truth, we are to cleave unto it, and to yeeld reverence, faith and obedience to it as to the doctrine of Iesus Christ. So much touching the description of *Paul* by his office.

Now to the efficient cause of it in the words following (*By the will of God*;) wee are to marke that the Apostle in setting downe the efficient and first true cause of his Apostleship, excludeth his owne will, that he was called to be an Apostle and sent to preach the Gospell, not by his owne will, but by the will of God. He had no such will or disposition in himselfe, no doubt hee was unwilling, but the Lord who in his eternall counsell had appointed him to that office, in his good time by his grace called him, and of unwilling made him willing, and even then when he was a bloody persecutor, the Lords will was effectually to make him a famous Preacher.

See then how the Lord brings his purpose to passe for the good of those that belong to him, in their advancement to some good place and calling even then when they themselves are most averse, unwilling, repugnant and utterly against it. We reade, *Exod. 4. 13.* when *Moses* shewed himselfe most backward, pleaded excuse, and intreated the Lord to send some other, then the Lords will was effectually to advance him to that honour to be the messenger to *Pharaoh*, to deliver Israel, to have the leading and government of a mighty people. We finde the like of *Jeremy* the Prophet in the first chapter of his prophecy, and when *Jonah* the Prophet flatly refused to go to Nineveh, and as he thought fled from Nineveh, then the Lord overruled him, and advanced him to be a meane of the repentance of that City, as we read in the prophecy of *Jonah*.

Doth the Lord by the effectually working of his will call and advance men to some place and calling, even then when they are carried in a contrary course? Let this then in the first place strengthen our faith in his providence and goodness, that when wee are called and set in any lawfull calling, and go on with good conscience in that calling, the Lord will assist us and helpe our infirmities. For doth the Lord call to any service and not give strength to performe it? yes doubtlesse, though we finde our infirmities still resting upon us, yet if we hold on a constant course in that calling, we shall finde supply of strength. The Lord could (if it had so pleased him) have made *Moses* eloquent, but he did not, that his glory might more appeare, yet he was with his mouth and taught him what to say, as hee promised, *Exod. 4. 12.* *Moses* found continuall aid and assistance and supply of his wants from the Lord, and thus shall they that goe on with good conscience in a lawfull calling.

Againe, doth the Lord many times dispose them that belong to him, to a place and dignity cleane contrary to their meaning, will, purpose, and course of life formerly held? then let all Gods children learne for their comfort that Gods providence watcheth over them for their good, when they full little thinke of

The description of him from the efficient cause of his office.

Note,

Doff. 2.

God brings his purpose to passe for the good of his children often times when they are most averse and repugnant.

Vse 1.

Strength to our faith that the Lord will assist us in our lawfull callings.

Vse 2.

Gods providence watcheth over his children when they full little thinke of it.

it. Full little did *Paul* thinke when he breathed out threatnings and slaughter against the Church of Christ, that he should have been a preacher of his Gospel but that good wil and providence of God over his, ever waketh and never sleepeth, though they sleepe, and never thinke of any such thing, nay please themselves in a contrary course; yet his providence is working for their comfort, health, life, advancement unto honour, &c. Do not many naturall things make this a cleere point, and preach thus much unto us? Growes not the grasse and come when we sleepe, and the best hearbs for our health and use? Come not sweet showers when we sleepe that make husbandmen reioyce and sing? and many other things make it manifest, that the good providence of God watcheth over his children for their good, when they full little thinke of it. Excellent is that story of *Mordecai* to this purpose, *Hest. 6.* we there finde that King *Ahasuerus* when he could not sleepe, commanded the Chronicles to be read before him, and finding there the loyalty of *Mordecai*, that hee had discovered a treason intended against him, and yet had no honour nor dignity given him for that discovery, the King presently thought how and which way was fit to honour him, and it was concluded by the advice of *Haman* (who thought that the honour intended would have light upon himselfe) that *Mordecai* should be apparelled with royall apparell, &c. as followeth in the chapter. Poore *Mordecai* no doubt was a sleepe when this was concluded, and little thought of any such matter, but the good providence of a gracious God (that never sleepeth) sent this comfortable mercy to his childe for his honour, and for the good of the whole Church by his advancement. Oh then let this and the like examples teach us that Gods providence watcheth over us for good when we little think of it, and that our good God purposeth to as many as be his children, such good as we can hardly imagine; and let us never fall from this God by distrustfull feare, that so careth and provideth for his when they are a sleepe, and when they runne on in a contrary course. We are further to marke that *Paul* riseth up and ascendeth from his calling to the will of God, that he was now called to be an Apostle, and being called he knew the Lord had before in his will and purpose appoynted him to that office, for he knew not this but by the event; whence ariseth this doctrine, that the will of God is signified and revealed unto us either by the Scripture the written word of God, or by particular events, by the issues and falling out of things good or evill, for it is certaine that nothing comes to passe but by the will and providence of God: if it were otherwise the Lord were not almighty, which is not to be imagined; when therefore any thing is come to passe, Gods will is therein revealed. For example, when a mans house is burnt, and his goods consumed, then Gods will and pleasure is revealed touching the losse of those things, as *Iob* said, *Iob. 1. 21.* *The Lord hath taken,* because the Lords will was manifested in the losse of his goods.

Dott. 3.
Gods will revealed either by Scripture or by particular events.

Obiect.

Obiect. Is Gods will revealed in the event of things good and evill, then God willeth evill?

Answer.

Answer. Evill is two fold, of punishment, and of sinne. The first God willeth and is the author of it, for punishment being a worke of iustice against sinne, is good, and is willed, and wrought by God, *Isay 45. 7.* *Amos 3. 6* But for the evill of sinne we must consider a difference between sinne it selfe, and the event of sinne, or coming to passe of sinne: the first of these is evill, and the other good in respect of the end, to which it is by God disposed, namely his glory in the manifestation of his iustice and mercy. Now God willeth not sinne it selfe, but the event or coming to passe of sinne: but how? not by effecting it, but by withholding his grace from the creature, and not hindring it when hee might if he would, and so *ex consequenti*, God willeth the event of sinne, he not hindring it, willingly permits it to be done for a good end, even his glory for the manifestation of his iustice and mercy.

Vjs.

Would we then know Gods will both for matter of faith and fact? (both things

things to be knowne, beleevd, and practised) look then into the word of God, Would we againe know his will concerning particular good or evill, to come upon the outward estate of our selves or others? then tarry wee the time the Lord hath appointed to discover and make it knowne unto us by event. It is exceeding rash and hastie boldnesse in some, who dare goe about to search the will of God in things to come, by the helpe of wizards, witches, and diabolicall meanes, yea a thing too frequent and common, and as wicked and damnable it is, that some many times gather arguments of life or death, of good or evill successe upon their actions and businesse, by the flying or crying of birds, by bleeding of the nose, burning of the eare, falling of salt, by dreaming, &c. This is a great abuse and prophanation of the workes of Gods providence, the Lord hath not appointed these things to manifest his will in things to come, to be ominous, or to portend good or evill: and to observe them to that end, is a superstitious device of men seduced by Satan, without any Christian or naturall reason. The Lord sometimes suffers the event to answer the foolish observation of such as give heed to these things, in iudgement, because they give heed unto them, and by that meanes the Devil steales out of their hearts that assured trust in the providence of God, which is the chiefe stay of true beleivers amidst the troubles and disorders of this world, and so as the Preacher saith, Eccl. 9. 12. *As the fishes are taken in an evill net, and as the birds are caught in the snare, so are they snared in the evill time when it falls upon them suddenly; they know not which way to turne themselves and to winde out of that trouble, nor where to finde comfort.* Remember we what we finde, Deut. 28, to feare God aright, and truly, and then *blessed shall we be at home, abroad, in towne, in field, in basket, in dough, in sheepe in kine, &c.* and contrariwise, cursed for want of religion and the feare of God. For that is revealed to be the cause of Gods curse, not because the Raven flew over the house, &c. Now further, *Paul* making the will of God the efficient and first cause of his Apostleship, that being an outward state and condition of life, this generall conclusion followeth from hence, that the will and providence of God doth appeare, and is to bee seene in the distinction of men into severall callings, in ranging men into severall orders and degrees, disposing some to be Apostles, some rulers, and Magistrates, &c. For howsoever it seemes to be against nature: that whereas all men are of one nature, sprung of one originall, alike subiect to death, there should bee so gather inequality amongst them, yet herein shines forth the wonderfull providence of God, who out of so sundry orders and degrees of men, doth agree a sweet harmony and agreement, for the maintaining of the fellowship and society of mankind, without which it could not stand: for one could not endure and beare another, there would raigne many outrages, unlesse men were held in with the bridle of some greater authority and power: yea more then this, the providence of God doth cleerely shew it selfe even in the confusions and disorders that be amongst men, distinguished into severall callings, when in the place where there should bee iustice there is wormewood, and in the place of Iudgement wickednesse, yet therein appeares the providence of God, who doth wisely order and dispose things so disordered and intangled to a very good end, namely, to the preservation of the society of mankind. For it is a true position, better a tyranny then an Anarchy, better to indure tyrannicall oppressing Magistrates, then to have none at all; for that state where there is no publike power at all, but every man may doe what seemes good in his owne eyes, instead of one tyrant makes many: herein then appeares the providence of God, by disposing men into different degrees and callings, though they bee corrupt and disordered in their places, yet the Lord by his infinite wisdom doth order and dispose them to a good end.

This may settle and stay our mindes from wonder and amazement, when wee see many corruptions and disorders in men of place and authority, when iustice

Knowledge of
Gods will for
saith.
Faith is from
the word of
God, and of
particular
good and evill
by the events.

Note.

Deut. 13.

Doct. 4.
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Againe, a second thing that may hence be concluded is this, as *Paul* had his Apostleship by the will of God, so every mans place and portion in this world is appointed unto him by the will of God: every mans condition whether high or low, rich or poore, publike or private, is allotted unto him by the good pleasure of God, for his wil and providence guiding and governing al other things wee may not seclude and shut it out from having stroake in the conditions of men: no certainly it is a generall aphorisme and sentence of Scripture, that the Lord maketh poore and maketh rich, bringeth low and exalteth, and every man hath his portion at his appointment; hee made *Ioseph* governour of Egypt, and he made *Lazarus* lie begging at the rich mans gate; every one hath his lot and condition, not by hap or chance, but according to the ordinance and appointment of the Lord.

This doctrine ought to worke in every Christian heart patience and peace, to be contented with the estate we enjoy whatsoever it is; for as the common proverbe is, beggers must be no chusers, and wee are all beggers in respect of him who hath the rule and disposition of all things. Have I then little? it is the will of God I should have but little, and I ought to be contented; have I more? it is more mercy, requiring more thankfullnes, thankfull for the one, & thankfull for the other, and ever contented with Gods will: and to that wee are to consider; first that the calling and condition wee are in, being appointed of the Lord, is the best state and condition for us, if wee be Gods children, for he willing our eternall good, must needs will that which is best fitting our service of him in this transitory passage. Secondly, we are to consider what a clog & hindrance to good duties, discontentment is: they who are discontented with their state, can never doe their dutie in their place and calling, their minds are hopped and enthralled, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. Lastly, consider that the outward blessings and good things being no sure signes of Gods favour, if we bee not content with them, it makes it plaine, that wee are not in his favour, though wee abound in outward good things, for to his children with the things themselves, hee gives quietnesse and contentment, wealth without woe, store without fore, *Psal.* 117 2. and as we use to say, it is the speech of *Salomon*, *Pro.* 10. 12. *Discontentment is left to godlesse persons, who are ignorant of Gods providence,* so then let these things stirre us up to quietnesse and contentation: our dwelling here or there is by the providence of God, in a faire house or a foule; our condition of life, be it a rich trade or a poore, is by his appointment, wheresoever or howsoever, it is above our merit or desert, we therefore ought to be pleased and thankful. Now in that *Paul* ioynes *Timothy* a brother to himselfe in the writing of this Epistle, he did it (no doubt) both to shew that he wrote no private opinion of his owne, but such things as had consent of other true teachers of the Gospell, and also the better to move the *Colossians* to receive his doctrine: whence we may gather that consent in true doctrine is an excellent thing and much to be regarded. When teachers meete together in one truth, as *Paul* and *Timothy* did, it is a thing of great use and consequence; for besides this, that it doth free the teachers

chers from the note and blemish of lightnesse and newfangled giddnesse, and that they teach not opinions of private fancy, as Paul reasons for himselfe, and proves himselfe to be free from lightnesse. 1 Cor. 1. 17. it shewes that they follow the rule of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 14. 32. Besides this, it is of excellent use in respect of the hearers, who if they be unbelievers not yet brought to the faith are thereby moved to faith and obedience, as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 14. 24. *If all ioyntly prophesy, and there come in one that beleeueth not, or one vnlearned, he is rebuked of all, and iudged of all: which argues consent of those that rebuke, and then marke what followeth, hee will fall downe on his face and confesse that God is in the teachers, and so be moved to beleeve; if the hearers be such as already beleeve, then consent of teachers is a speciall inducement to constancy and perleurance, and serves much for the further building of them up in faith and holy duties, as in the raising up of a materiall building, ioynt-labour of many hands rids much worke, when mens hands worke together ioyntly and cheerefully, then the building goes well forward; so in the spirituall building of the Church it must needs be a notable furtherance of the worke of that building, when the builders take paines together with consent and good agreement. This we are to contend for, by earnest and hearty prayer; for certainly the devill doth hinder the building of Gods Church by nothing more then by difference and dissensions amongst the builders. And seeing that by Gods mercy wee have in our Church consent in substance of doctrine necessary to salvation, this ought to move us to constancy and continuance, and not to bee like children, as the Apostle speakes, wavering and carried about with every winde of doctrine by the deceit and craftinesse of seducing and Popish inchanters: for though they buzze into the eares of the simple (therby to seate themselves upon their consciences,) that there is great difference and dissent amongst us, and a merveilous consent among them of their Church, yet they that are able to iudge aright, see and perceive the cleane contrary, that we by Gods mercy differ not in matter of substance, but of circumstance, and their owne writers of speciall note avouch as much, *Morton Apologia, Cathol. p. 204. &c.* Seeing then all of sanctified iudgement amongst us, and some of our adversaries (truth breaking out of their mouthes) confesse that we differ not in the matter of substance, let not difference for matter of circumstance make us begin to bee cold and backsliding in matter of substance, no doubt the end the devill drives at in our differences is *Atheisme* or *Papisme*, and he hath attained his end in too many, let us strive to disappoint him of his purpose, and to that end wee are often to thinke on the argument of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 1. 13. That if we follow factions, somehold of one and some of another, we shall be brought to that exigent that we must either confesse Christ to be devided (a thing impossible) or our selves to be no members of Christ, and that we are carnall, 1 Cor. 3. 3. 4. So much of the first verse.*

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Dof. 1.
Religion
knowes not
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conditions.

Obiession.

Answer.

Vfe 1.
Comfort for
godly poore
professors.

Vfe 2.
For carelesse
irreligious
poore profes-
sors.

or state soever, filling them with these titles (*Saints and Faithfull, &c.* The lesson hence is this, that Religion (as one saith) knowes not our persons, our outward callings and conditions, not that religion doth not admit distinction of order, and degrees of calling, for therein the providence of God appears as before was shewed, but it respects not the outward states and callings of men in propounding and applying the doctrine of grace and salvation. All in Christ of what calling, state or degree soever, are holy beleeving brethren, as the Apostle saith, Galath. 3. 28. *There is neither Jew Grecian, bond nor free, male nor female, but all are one in Christ Iesus*: there is no difference nor inequality of them that be in Christ in respect of iustification and adoption.

Why? but will some say, this seemes contrary to that, Revel. 22. 1. where the holy Ghost saith, *be that is righteous, let him be righteous still*, or more righteous, if there bee some encrease of righteousness and iustification; then there are different degrees and inequality.

Answer. The righteousness there spoken of, is inherent, wrought in them that are iustified, which is a fruit of their iustification in Christ; of that there may be encrease, some have a greater measure of grace and sanctification then others, and accordingly shall have a greater degree of glory in heaven. But that righteousness by which a man is iust in the sight of God, is not increased, for that is perfect in Christ, and admits no increase; they that are in him are equally iust in the sight of God, as one saith well, Hee that truly beleeveth in Christ, is iust as he that hath fulfilled the whole law; he that beleeveth in Christ hath the perfection of the law, and so cannot have any increase. It is then cleere that there is no difference nor inequality of them that are iustified and the adopted sonnes of God in Christ. This is full of sweet comfort to all such as beleeveth in Christ, though they be base and of low degree in the world, yet this doctrine tels them that they are the deare Saints of God, and in the sight of God equall and fellowes to the greatest, in respect of iustification and adoption. Let this comfort and incourage thee in every good way. It is commonly seene, and one may easily observe it, that many such as are poore and not like to rise in this world, as their state seemes most desperate in the eye of the world and in their owne opinion, so they give themselves over to a desperate & lewd kinde of life, to carelesse behaviour, to drunkenness, to swearing, to railing, &c. And why? they foolishly thinke that as they are on the ground and can fall no lower, so they cannot rise nor be in better estate then they are, and therefore care not what they speake or doe, nor what men thinke or speake of them: oh that they would but remember, that if they be in Christ, though of meane condition in the world, yet they are equall and matchable to the best and greatest, brethren to the most noble, and to Kings and Princes; no doubt the consideration and comfort of this, settled and wrought in their hearts, would raise up their mindes to better thoughts, they would then thinke thus with themselves. Though we be poore wretches, and of meane condition and despised in the world, yet this is a great and singular comfort unto us, that wee being in Christ, are as highly in Gods favour as the best, we are as pretious unto him as the apple of his owne eye, we have title to his heavenly treasures, which are better then all the riches and treasures in the world.

We have the word of reconciliation, the covenant of grace, and the broad scales of his kingdome belonging unto us, this is our comfort, and this comfort will not suffer the consideration of our poore estate to carry us to do any thing unworthy of this so excellent a condition. If men thus reason, they are poore, and therefore will be carelesse in their carriage, then certainly as yet they have no part in this comfort and sweet consolation, that they are equall to the best in iustification and adoption; they make themselves equall indeed, but to whom? to *Saints faithfull, &c.* no, but to bruite beasts, as we reade of *Nebuchad-*

was changed into the disposition of a brutish beast, for it is apparent to themselves that they are inferior to other men in outward condition, and the Scripture maketh it plain that by disobedience to God, man doth degenerate from his kinde, and becomes like the brutish beast that perisheth. *Psal. 49. 20.* Nay, like Satan, for which cause our Saviour calleth Herod a Fox; *Luk. 13. 32.* And Peter (one of his owne Disciples) *Satan, Mark. 8. 33.* Let then all poore despised ones in the world comfort themselves in this, that in Christ they are equall to the best, in respect of iustification and adoption, and will remember to rise up from this comfort to a life befitting such as are iustified and adopted.

Now further in that the Apostle calleth the Colossians brethren in Christ, a title signifying not only love but equality, we may conclude that all in Christ have faith like pretious to the Apostles faith, such a faith as makes them brethren to the Apostles; yea if we be in Christ, our faith loveth us truly and as certainly as the Apostles faith saved them. Peter makes it cleere, *2 Pet. 1. 1.* Simon Peter, a servant and an Apostle of Iesus Christ, to them which have obtained like precious faith with us. And S. Iohn 1 Epist. 1. 2. 3. The life appeared, that is Iesus Christ, that you might also have fellowship with us, and that our fellowship also may be with the Father, and with his sonne Iesus Christ. By faith in Iesus Christ we have fellowship with the Apostles, yea with God the Father and with his sonne Iesus Christ.

If then wee have like precious faith with the Apostles, if by our faith wee have fellowship with them, yea with God himselfe, it must needs follow that they erre greatly who teach that the Apostles might be sure of salvation, but not other Christians, that the Apostle might say, *Rom. 8. 38. 39.* I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Iesus our Lord. But wee may not say so, and that this is false and erroneous, marke but that one sentence of S. Iohn, 1 Epist. 5. 13. These things I write to you, that believe in the name of the sonne of God, that ye may know that ye have eternall life, and that ye may believe in the name of the sonne of God. S. Iohn writes to all Christians that they may know they have eternall life. Now knowledge, as all define it, is a determination or fastning of the minde to one part with a certainty. If Christians then may know they have eternall life, they may be settled, they may fasten their heart and soule to it with a certainty. So Saint Paul speaks of himselfe and all other beleeving Christians, *2 Cor. 5. 1.* We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be destroyed, wee have abiding given of God, that is an house not made with hands, but eternall in the heavens. And what is that but everlasting life? So much of the parties.

Now to the salutation in the words following. *Grace &c.* Wherein the Apostle wisheth and prayeth for two things to be given, *Grace and peace*, both from God the fountaine of grace and peace, and from him not as an absolute God but as our father, and from the Lord Iesus Christ the Mediator, by whom all good things come unto us. Here then in this salutation two generall things are to be stood upon. First, the things wished and prayed for (*Grace and peace.*) Secondly, from whom they descend and come unto us. For the first, touching the sense and meaning of the words, we finde in Scripture a twofold acception of the word. (*Grace*) it signifieth either the free and gracious favour of God, whereby he doth accept and is well pleased with his chosen in and for Christ, giving them remission of finnes, iustification, adoption, &c. or grace given, the gift of grace wrought in us by his spirit, in both these acceptions we finde the word used in one and the same sentence, *Rom. 5. 4. 5.* Now here we are to understand it in the first signification onely, as signifying the gracious favour of God

Doct. 2.

All in Christ have faith like pretious to the Apostles faith.

Therefore other Christians may be sure of their salvation as well as any of the Apostles.

The salutation of the parties written unto.

Interpretation

God, whereby he doth embrace his chosen, and the word (*peace*) doth comprehend, both inward peace, tranquillity of minde and conscience spoken of, *Rom. 5. 1.* and outward peace with the creature, as Angels and men, yea with beastes and stones, as it is *Iob 5. 23.* and outward welfare, prosperitie and good successe: for so we reade, *Gen. 43. 27.* *Ioseph* asked his brethren of their peace, or, as the word is translated, of their prosperitie. When therefore the Apostle wisheth grace and peace to the Colossians, it is as much as if he had said, I wish you the free and gracious favour of God in Christ Iesus, and likewise quietnesse of conscience in respect of Gods favour, and outward peace with all the creatures, yea good successe and prosperitie in all things. Hence first wee are to marke that the Apostle in his wish and prayer for good to the Colossians, gives the first place to the grace and favour of God, wishing them first grace, then peace.

Doct. 3.

The grace of God is the chiefest good thing to bee sought after.

Hence our lesson is this: that the grace and favour of God is the chiefest good thing of us to be desired and sought after. It is the doctrine of our Saviour, *Math. 6. 33.* *First seeke the kingdome of God, and his righteousness.* David prayed thus, *Psal. 4. 6. 7.* *Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon us.* As if hee had said, therein is my chiefe ioy and comfort, yea I finde more true ioy and comfort in that, then in the increase of wheate and wine. The Apostle saith hee counted all things drosse and dung, that hee might be found in Christ, and so in the favour of God: and there bee many reasons why wee should thus esteeme and bee of the Apostles minde: for why? the grace and favour of God is proper and peculiar to his children. Riches and outward things of this life are common to them with the wicked. Againe, the grace and favour of God makes the outward things of this life truly comfortable and blessings unto us, without which they are nothing but accursed vanities and vexation of spirit, as the Preacher speakes. And let us compare the grace and favour of God with the grace and favour of the world, even the greatest favour of the highest in the world: the grace and favour of the world the most it can doe is but to enrich or advance us, giving us leave to enjoy good things and possessions; in affliction and in the houre of death it cannot helpe nor deliver us from affliction, from despaire and death, but the favour of God in the midst of trouble, sorrow, perplexitie, and in the conflicts of conscience gives comfort and consolation, yea it worketh such rest and reioycing of heart, as all the goods in the world cannot yeeld. A man upon his death-bed galled with a guilty conscience, would give all the world (if it were his) for the least dram of that comfort Gods children finde in the apprehension of Gods favour. These things may serve not onely to make knowne and to prove the truth of this, that Gods grace and favour is most excellent, but also to effect and stirre up our Christian soules to breath and seeke after it above all things in the world; and let the consideration of the excellency of Gods favour in Christ stirre us up to spend both time and strength, not after the manner of the world, in hunting after riches, and pleasure, but that we may finde some assurance of Gods favour towards us, and to this end carefully use we the meanes appointed both to beget in us faith in the blood of Christ, whereby we may be assured of it, as hearing, reading, meditating in the word of God with prayer, and also to ratifie and confirme the same, as a frequent and a reverent use of the Sacraments.

Doct. 4.

Where there is assurance of Gods favour there is peace of conscience, and contrariwise.

In the second place in that the Apostle ioynes these two together (*grace and peace*) we are taught: Where there is assurance of the grace and favour of God, there is peace of conscience; where is no assurance nor perswasion of grace, there is no peace of conscience: *Rom. 5. 1.* *Then being iustificed by faith, we have peace towards God.* The Apostle makes peace towards God, that is peace of conscience, the fruit of iustification by faith, that when by faith we are assured of the remission of sinnes and Gods favour, then wee shall have peace of conscience.

conscience. The reason and ground of this is, because Gods favour in Christ doth disburthen the conscience of: that thing that sevs God and the conscience at difference and enmity, and makes it accused in the sight of God, namely the guilt and burthen of sinne, and that being removed by grace, and the conscience thereof perswaded, it must needs then bee quiet and at peace with God, and excused and comforted in the sight of God.

Let this be thought on first by all ignorant and impenitent persons, let them know they have no true peace of conscience, because that springs and grows out of this root, a certaine knowledge and assurance of grace, which cannot stand either with affected ignorance, or hard hearted impenitency; they may have a drowsie or a senselesse conscience, as it is in benumbed and seared consciences: but they, neither feeling their sinne, nor feeling the sting of conscience, cannot have true peace of conscience; the feeling of sinne alwayes going before that.

Againe, there is no peace of conscience where there is no assurance of grace, because grace only doth release from sinne, and so quiet the conscience: then how is it possible that anything in us by the dignity and merit of it should pacifie and settle the conscience in the sight of God? how can it bee, as the Church of Rome teacheth, that any goodnesse or righteousnesse inherent in us should of it selfe breed true peace of conscience? it is impossible that the conscience should be quiet and joyfull, unlesse it have peace through grace. For admit this (which can never be proved) yet grant this, that a man could aspire and come to a perfect measure of love to God, even perfect in measure and degree, according to the exact rule of the law of God, yet could not that perfect love procure remission of any one forepassed sinne. Perfect love in degree by the condition of the covenant of works, *doe this and thou shalt live*, can onely bring the recompence and reward of life, it cannot both procure life and also satisfie for sins past, that is no part of Gods promise annexed to his covenant of works hee saith not, *doe this and thou shalt live*, and if thou faile in doing this and breake my law, thou shalt by other good deeds done satisfie for that breach, no, the condition of perfect obedience in the morall law propounded, once broken, there can be no compensation nor expiation but by punishment either in the person offending or some other in his stead: it is without question that the active obedience of Christ was most exact, he in his life fulfilled the whole law of God, yet was not that legall meritorious and most perfect obedience of his sufficient to procure remission of sinnes, for then hee dyed in vaine, he must over and besides that suffer death, even the cursed death of the crosse, and beare in his body and soule the extremity of Gods wrath, before hee could satisfie Gods iustice for the sinnes of his chosen; therefore it is said, *1 Pet. 2. 24. he bore our sinnes in his body on the tree*. Wee may then safely conclude against the Papists, that it is not love, nor any other thing in us (admit it to be most perfect) that can satisfie the iustice of God, and so settle the conscience: onely the assurance of grace and of the favour of God in Christ can doe it.

Now in that the Apostle wisheth peace to the Colossians under that title, understanding not only inward peace, as hath been declared, but outward prosperity: we are taught that wee may lawfully, yea our duty is to pray for the peace and prosperitie of the Church. Wee shall finde through the tenour of the whole Scripture, that if Gods children found comfort or rejoycing in good things and blessings of God temporall or eternall: their care hath been to use all good meanes for the continuance of them: as *David* finding true ioy in beholding the prosperity of Ierusalem, stirreth up himselfe and others to pray for the continuance of it, Psal. 122. 6. 7. Reasons why wee should so doe are, first, because wee shall be therein like God himselfe, who is said to reioyce in doing good to his Church. Secondly, wee shall thereby testifie our communion with
C
the

V. 61.

Therefore ignorant and impenitent persons have no true peace of conscience.

Vf. 2.

Therefore nothing in us by the dignity and merit of it can pacifie the conscience in the sight of God.

-10 DoE.5

We may lawfully and it is our duty to pray for the peace of the Church.

We may also pray for temporall good things in particular.

Exception.

Answer.

Two needfull cautions.

1.

2.

V/c.

We are therefore to take heed of the guiltinesse of an evill conscience in coming by temporall things.

The fountaine from whence things wished for do descend.

The word father taken two waies, personally and essentially.

the Church, that we are members of it, and have a fellow-feeling both of the good and of the afflictions of the Church: but a more speciall conclusion following also from hence is this, that as the Apostle prayed for peace, so it is lawfull for us to pray for temporall good things, in particular for health, liberty, or peace, plenty, fruitfull seasons, &c. Iam. 5. 16. *Let any sick, let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray for him.* Where wee see the elders of the Church sent for, are to pray for the health of the sicke, by proportion wee may call upon God for other temporall blessings; examples are many to this purpose. *Moses* prayed for the victory against the Amalekites, Exod. 17. 11. *Abraham* that *Isaac* might live, Gen. 17. 18. and was heard. *Paul* for a prosperous journey, Rom. 1. 10. The ground of this is the promise of God, who hath promised to preserve his Church & children in this life, and to supply their necessarie wants, and what he hath promised we may lawfully pray for, Gods promise is the ground of prayer. Against this some take exception, and say, Wee know not whether temporall good things will be good or hurtfull unto us, therefore we are to leave them to be given at the pleasure of the Lord.

Answer. In prayer we are not to regard our owne knowledge of the successe and event of temporall good things we pray for, but referre that to the wisdom of God who knowes what is good for us, and if he see them good, will grant them unto us, if not will withhold them. Therefore notwithstanding this, it remaines a truth that wee may lawfully pray for temporall things, and that we may have more speciall direction in this point (because it is to be understood with some caution of necessity to be observed in the practise of it) I seek we no further then the words of the Apostle in this place, where we have these two cautions offered to be thought on; first, that wee pray for them in the second place. First pray for grace, then for peace and prosperity: for if we want pardon of sinne, and be not reconciled to God, wee have no right to temporall good things. God may say unto us when wee aske them at his hands, as Christ said to the woman in the Gospell, *it is not meet to take the childrens bread and give it unto whelps.* Secondly, that we pray for grace with them, that we never pray for any temporall blessing alone, but for the blessing of God upon it, for grace with it, to use it well to Gods glory and our comfort, and the good of others. For as wholesome and good meate taken into a corrupt stomacke feeds bad humours, and breakes out into ulcers and sores, so temporall good things received of wicked and gracelesse persons; give nourishment to sinfull lusts of the heart, which breake out in pride, in wantonnesse, in riot, and in many disorders.

The use of this is thus much, that seeing it is lawfull to pray for temporall good things, so as we pray for grace in the first place, and for grace with them that we may use them well: let us take heed wee set not a barre betweene ourselves and prayer for a blessing upon the temporall good things we enjoy, that is the guiltinesse of conscience in ill getting of them. For can a theete pray over his booty that God would blesse it? hee cannot, no more can wee pray for grace and the blessing of God upon our temporall good things, if our consciences tell us wee have gotten them ill. And so much of the things wished and prayed for by the Apostle, &c. Let us come to see from whence they descend, and first they are said to come from God the fountaine of all goodnesse, and from him as a father. For the right understanding of the words, we must know that by the word (Father) is principally understood the first person in the Trinity, yet so as in heart and minde wee must conceive the Sonne and the holy Ghost. For it is a rule in Divinity that the word (Father) is taken personally, and by it is meant the first person in the Trinity, when one person is conferred with another, as verse. 3. but when it standeth in relation to us, it is taken essentially and to be understood of the Father, Sonne and holy Ghost, subsisting in the

the same Godhead and divine nature. Here by the way we may see how filly a shift it is that is used by the Papists to elude and put off our argument from this word *Father*, against invocation of Saints: for when we reason thus (Christ hath taught us to call on God the Father only, therefore not an Angel or Saint) they reply, this concludes not, for if this stand good, Christ hath taught us to call upon God the Father, and therefore not upon Angells and Saints then this likewise is a good inference, therefore not upon God the Sonne, nor upon God the holy Ghost, the rule delivered overthrowes this exception, for in calling on God our Father, wee call upon God the Father, Sonne and holy Ghost. But for the better clearing of these words, we are to know that God is our Father three waies: first in regard of creation, so *Adam* is called the sonne of God, Luk. 3. 38. Secondly, by adoption in Christ, Gal. 4. 5. 6. Thirdly, in regard of sanctification and regeneration by the word and spirit, 1. Pet. 1. 23. *We are borne anew not of mortall seed, but of immortall, by the word of God.* And so made sonnes of God by new birth. In this place we are to understand the Apostle not in the first respect, but in the second and third, that he prayed for grace and peace, not from God our Father by creation, but by adoption and regeneration: for as we are Gods creatures onely, and have no other privilege, we dare not approach his presence having defaced his image, and by sinne fallen from our first estate of creation. The words thus understood doe afford a double instruction, one of comfort, and another of duty. For the first, in that God is our Father in Christ, hereupon all that bee in Christ are taught to repose their whole trust and assistance of their hearts in him, to depend wholly on him for grace and mercie, and all good things. For why? he is God all-sufficient, able to command heaven and earth, to serve for our good: and hee is God our Father willing to doe us good, yea such a Father as cannot grow out of kinde, and leave off to be kinde, and tenderly affected towards his children, hee can as soon cease to bee God (which is impossible) as forget to doe good to his sonnes and daughters. *Can a woman forget her childe, and not have compassion on the fruit of her womb? though she could, yet will not I forget thee, saith the Lord to Zion.* Isai. 49. 15. Away then with all doubting of the good providence of God in the time of need: If we which are evil, yet in the nature of fathers provide good things for our children, how much more shal our heavenly father provide for the good of his children? it is our Saviours argument, Math. 7. 11. And let not reason stand against it, God is our father who hath given his owne deare sonne to die for us, to make us his children, *how then shall he not wish him give us all things?* that is the argument of the Apostle, Rom. 8. 32. Let me joyne to these a third argument, God made himselfe knowne to be our gracious and provident father, before wee could know, much lesse acknowledge our selves to be his children, he formed us in the wombe, hee brought us out in due time into the world, he provided milke in the brests, nourishment and all things needfull for us; yea more, hee entred into covenant with us (with as many of us as bee in Christ) to bee our God and father, and we to be his children for ever, he signed and sealed this covenant by the Sacrament of Baptisme, the soleme seal of our adoption, to be his sonnes and daughters, all these he did before we knew what was done unto us, and wil he now forget to provide good for us, when we know and acknowledge him, and by faith depend upon him? It is not possible, let then the comfort of this raise us up to an assured trust at all times in the providence of God our good and gracious father.

Againe, secondly is God our father, are wee his adopted sonnes and daughters in Christ, then let us know for our further comfort that the Lord cannot long behold our miseries and afflictions, without pity and compassion, our sighs, our groanes, our sobs of sorrow, and teares of repentance in time of trouble and distresse, cannot long be unrespected of the Lord, as a man of tender

bowels

Note.

God is our father three waies, and in what sense he is called our father.

Doct. 6.

For comfort we may depend upon God with full assurance, seeing he is our gracious father in Christ.

Pse 1.

We are not to doubt of Gods providence in the time of need.

Vse 2.

For comfort. God cannot see us to be long in trouble seeing he is our mercifull father.

bowels cannot look upon his child humbled, and upon his knees, and weeping before him, but be moved to pity towards him, much lesse can the Lord being the father and fountaine of all compassion and mercie. And to give further strength to this comfort, see and consider a notable patheticall speech of the Lord, *Hosea 11. 8. 9.* where the Lord makes as it were a demurre and pause upon the matter, when he was to execute his judgement on his people, and saith, *How shall I give thee up O Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee, as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me: my repentings are rolled together.* Could ever father speake more compassionately over his childe, when he is about to beate him? surely no tongue can expresse the pity and tender compassion of the Lord: now if the Lord have such a melting heart towards his poore people, that when the rod is up, and he is ready to strike, he holds his hand of himself, breaking out into these speeches, how should I doe it? my heart is turned up and downe in me, oh then what force have our sighes and groanes before him in time of distresse: If wee be his children, how doe our teares of unfained repentance flowing from a grieved heart, move the Lord to pity? can he continue to strike us, holding up our hands for mercie, looking upon him with watty eyes, humbled in the dust before him, and for Christ his sake begging pardon of sin, craving ease, comfort, and reliefe? No, no, be assured of it, he is our father, a kind, a loving, a good and tender father: he seeing our trouble and hearing our groanes, will be moved to pity, and not faile in due time to send comfort either of strength, or deliverance, let this comfort and cheere up the hearts of all the sonnes and daughters of God in Christ.

Now further in that God is our father, this must teach us to carry the affection of children, love, reverence, feare, humillity, and obedience towards him. *If we call him father, which without respect of persons judgeth according to every mans worke, we must passe the time of our dwelling here in feare.* 1. Pet. 1. 17. As often as we open our mouths and call God our father, so often even of our owne mouthes the Lord shall judge us. If we neither live, nor desire to live in the obedience of his children; as wee take comfort in God to be our father, so we must also carry our selves as he may take pleasure in us to be his children, or else the word father in the mouth, and no duty of sonnes in the life, makes God of a Father a Iudge unto us, and turnes his favour into fury, his pity into plagues, punishments and judgements against us, yea our owne mouthes shall testifie against us, and of them he will judge and condemne us. Let us then take this profit by it, that God is our father, even to reforme us daily, as the Lord shall give grace and strength into the obedience of children. And so much of the first author and giver of grace and peace in these words from God our Father.

Now touching the last words of this verse, the Apostle saith, *Grace and peace come from the Lord Iesus Christ*, that is immediately: for grace and peace come from God the father as from the fountaine, but by the mediation of Christ, and it is to be marked that the Apostle calls Christ (the Lord in generall, not in restraining the word (Lord) as standing in relation to his members, as in the next verse. Now Christ is called (the Lord) as having full power over all things, as being Lord of life and death, of Heaven, Hell, and of all creatures in Heaven and Earth; so we reade *Act. 3. 15. Act. 2. 36. Act. 5. 31.* this power Christ hath not only as he is God, equall to his Father, but as man also by the donation and gift of his Father. More shall be spoken of this title in the next verse.

Now in that Christ our Saviour is Lord of life and glory, and giver of grace, peace, repentance, and remission of sinnes, we may hence conclude that he is God coeternall with his Father, and coequall to his Father: and this is cleare in many places of the Scripture, and by his miraculous workes, manifesting divine power, and by the honour and divine worship given unto him both by men

as the Lord
of the
fountain
of all
compassion
and mercie

Doct. 7.
For duty
we must carry
the affection
of children to
wards God
seeing he is
our father.

Grace & peace
come from our
Lord Iesus
Christ imme-
diately.

Doct. 8.
Christ is God
coeternall and
coequall with
the father.

men and Angels. And the consideration of this ought to strengthen the faith of as many as beleeve in Christ, teaching them that by the merit of his death apprehended by faith, they have grace and peace, full remission of finnes and perfect redemption from eternall death and damnation, and so making them to rest wholly on his death, as a perfect satisfaction to God for their finnes. For why? Christ our *Iesus* who was content to shed his blood for us, was not only man but God, and all the workes of God are perfect: therefore we need not seeke for grace and peace, satisfaction and remission of finnes any where but in Christ. The workes of penance, which the Popish sort hold able to satisfie for finnes, which they foolishly terme veniall, doe mightily derogate from this one, full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice of Christ once offered upon the Crosse, for *with one offering hath he consummated for ever them that are sanctified*, Heb. 10. 14. Christ who suffered was both God and man, united into one person, and by vertue of his Godhead, he gave power to his death to be meritorious and of infinite price and value, the Church is said to be purchased with the blood of God, *Act. 20. 28.* not that God can suffer or shed blood, but thus we are to conceive it, that Christ suffered only as man, but because of the personall union, Christ being God and man in one person, it is said that God shed his blood, noting and giving us to understand for our comfort, the infinite merit and sufficiency of his death, that the person suffering, being not meere man but God also, his death was a sufficient satisfaction for our finnes.

Uerfe 3. *We give thanks to God, even the father of our Lord Iesus Christ, alwayes praying for you.*

IN this verse, the Apostle begins the preface to his whole Epistle and continues it to the twelfth verse, and it stands upon a congratulation and a prayer. The congratulation from this third verse to the ninth, the prayer in the verses following.

The words of this third verse, containe the generall proposition both of the Apostles congratulation and prayer, that he and *Timothy* did congratulate and reioyce and pray for the *Colossians*: his congratulation is expressed by the manner of it, namely, a giving thanks to God, who is here described by relation to Christ: *We give thanks to God, even the father of our Lord Iesus Christ*. His prayer is set out by the time (*alwayes*) that whensoever he prayed, he was mindful of them, and prayed for them: these are the generall things contained in this verse, wherein we are to marke that the Apostle expressing his congratulation or reioyeing, by giving thanks for good things, that thanksgiving falls into prayer, he begins in thanksgiving and he ends in prayer; his thanksgiving begets and brings forth prayer. The point hence arising is this.

That one grace well used brings forth another, as there is a combination of finnes, one finne never goes alone but begets and brings forth another; so is one grace attending upon another, and is linked and lapped within another, where grace is well used it will increase; the things of this world, the more they are used the more they are worn, but it is contrary in the graces of the spirit of God, one of them begets and brings forth another, as the Apostle saith, *Rom. 5. 4. Patience brings forth experience, and experience hope*. We may observe in our selves, that as many as have hearts opened as *Lydia* had, *Act. 16. 14.* to attend to the word preached; that attending with care, brings unto understanding the word: understanding and knowledge, used, begets faith and good affection: those being stirred up and exercised, bring forth a proportionable measure of obedience & practice: where the grace of attention and meditation is not used, it makes many good lessons fall as seed upon the pavement, and makes men ignorant of some principall things wherein they have often bene instructed.

Vse.

This serveth strongly to strengthen our faith concerning the sufficiency of the redemption wrought by Christ.

Verse 3.

The beginning of the preface to the whole Epistle.

The generall exposition of the Apostles congratulation and prayer.

Doct. 1.

One grace well used brings forth another.

Vse.

We must make
much of the
least measure
of grace.

Doct. 2.

Religious in-
vocation be-
longs only to
God.

instructed. This ought to teach men to make much of the least measure of grace, let them cherish it and use it, and it will increase, as our Saviour hath promised, *to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance.* Matth. 25. 29. And not to goe from the particular here offered, if men congratulate and reioyce with others for good things found in them, or use to reioyce for good things bestowed on themselves temporall or spirituall, giving thanks to God for the same, that reioycing of theirs going up to heaven in thanks to God; from him will bee sent downe further grace, even the grace of prayer and calling upon God, and from thence further feeling and comfort in those good things.

Secondly, in that the Apostle gave thanks and made prayer to God onely, we are taught, that religious invocation standing in petition and thanksgiving, belongs only to God; and this may bee confirmed, besides many testimonies of Scripture, by many reasons, viz. the very instinct of nature teacheth, whom we make our God, him to pray unto; though the Heathen had many gods, and so did not call on the true God, yet they thought none was to be called upon but a God: they alwayes called on him or them, whom they accounted gods: the mariners being heathen Idolaters cryed everyman to his god, *Iona. 1. 5.* so that to whom prayer belongs, hee is God by the opinion of the Heathen: yea the bruit creatures in their kinde call on God, *Psal. 147. 9. Hee giveth food to the beasts, and to the young ravens that cry.* In many verses of that Psalme David exciteth all creatures to prayse the Lord.

Secondly, Invocation is a sacrifice of the new Testament foretold, *Malac. 1. 11.* Hence giving of thanks is called a sacrifice, *Heb. 13. 15.* Now all sacrifices are to bee offered to God only, *Exod. 22. 20. Act. 14. 14.* Barnabas and Paul rent their clothes when the people of Lystra would have sacrificed unto them.

Thirdly, he to whom prayer belongs must be able to heare, understand and help them that pray unto him, yea he must have knowledge of their hearts, because prayer is sometime *Suspirium cordis*, but a sigh of the heart. *Wherefore criest thou,* saith the Lord to *Moses, Exod. 14. 15.* yet he spake never a word. *Hannah* spake in her heart, *1 Sam. 1. 13.* but God onely knoweth the hearts, *Act. 1. 24.* therefore to God only must prayer be made.

Last of all, Invocation and faith must alwaies go together: it is the argument of the Apostle, *Rom. 10. 14. How shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed?* Now wee must beleeve only in God, therefore to him onely must wee pray. This point being thus cleered and proved, it meeteth with the opinion of the Papists, who hold, and labour to maintaine invocation of Angels and Saints departed; that opinion cannot stand with this truth of God: but they endeavour to uphold their opinion by this reason; say they, *It is lawfull to call upon men living here upon the earth, while wee live together we may request one anothers prayers, as Paul did, Rom. 15. 30.* therefore it is lawfull to call on Saints departed: for (say they) if it be not lawfull, then it is for one of these causes, either because they will not heare us; (say they) that is not so, because now they have greater love unto us, then when they were on the earth: or because they know not what we pray for; but that also is not so, because looke how the Angels know the conversion of a sinner and reioyce, so the Saints departed know it: or lastly, because injury is done to God or to Christ; but this is otherwise, for then we might not request men living to pray for us.

This argument hath many branches: First, I answer to it in generall, that the consequent is naught, we may request the living to pray for us, therefore wee may pray to Saints departed; because for the first wee have both precept, and promise, for the other neither. Again, touching their proofs: first it is true, Saints departed have greater love, for love continueth for ever, *1 Cor. 13. 8.* yet the love departed is nothing else but a constant unchangeable and continuall desire, whereby they wish eternall happinesse and salvation to the whole Church

Vse.

Confutation
of invocation
of Angels and
Saints.

Church of God, and to all the faithfull, and that the Kingdome of Christ might bee perfected in all his members: thus we may grant, that Saints in heaven doe pray for us, that is, they wish well to the whole militant Church, and to all the members equally and indifferently; but to say they pray for one, and not for another, cannot bee granted, because it is contrary to that love they beare equally to all; and further, they are exempt from that feeling of our particular miseries which they had on the earth, because they would detract from their perfect ioy and glory, therefore we may not conclude from their love, that they pray for any one in particular. Secondly, whereas they say, as the Angels know the conversion of a sinner, so the Saints departed know it. We answer, there is not the same reason why the Saints departed should know it as the Angels do; because the Angels are appointed ministering spirits, *Heb. 1. 14* and know many particulars which happen unto us, and many of our private necessities; but the Saints doe not, being alwayes absent; and yet worship, and consequently invocation of Angels is forbidden in the second chapt. of this Epistle, and eighteenth verse, therefore much more of Saints, they neither knowing nor hearing our prayers. *Obiect.* God reveales to them what is prayed for. We answer againe this appeares not by any place of Scripture. Secondly, to what end should wee pray unto them, if they know not what we aske but by revelation? And to the last thing they alleadge we answer; That it doth derogate from Gods glory, and from the perfect mediation of Christ to call on Saints departed, whereas they except. Then to request the living to pray for us, we answer as before, the case is not alike. First, because we have both precept and promise for the one, and not for the other. Secondly, we make not the living mediators, as they doe Saints departed, but only request their mutuall prayers to commend our suites to Christ our head, they having a fellow-feeling of our wants, as wee have of theirs, and so as members together, we send up our mutuall prayers unto God, and exercise our charity one towards another; and so (notwithstanding this cavilling of the Papists) it stil remaines a firme truth, that invocation and prayer belongs only to God.

Now to the Apostles description of God, to whom hee gave thanks and prayed; God is here described by relation to Christ, that hee is the father of Christ our Lord and Saviour: the word (*father*) here standing in relation to Christ, is taken personally, as before wee noted; and that we may rightly conceive how God is the father of Christ, Christ being both God and man, wee must know that God is the father of Christ in respect of his deity, by nature, because he is of the same eternall essence with the Father, begotten from all eternity, and so the onely begotten sonne of God, *Ioh. 3. 16.* and in respect of his humanity, not because hee had substance of body and soule from the substance of his father, but because as man hee was conceived by the worke of the holy Ghost; *Luk. 1. 35.* and by personal union his humanity is assumed and doth subsist in his deity, the Word was made flesh, *Ioh. 1. 14.* and thus God is the father of Christ.

Wee are further to marke, that God is the father of our Lord Iesus Christ, whereby the Apostle gives us to understand how we are to conceive of Christ in respect of Gods chosen, as that he is their Saviour and their Lord, not only as he is Lord over all creatures, but in more speciall manner, and that in a double respect, first in respect of free donation from his father, *Ioh. 17. 9.* Secondly, in respect of his worke of redemption: *They are not your owne, for ye are bought for a price; 1 Cor. 6. 19. 20.* and so much may serve for the meaning of the words. Now wee are to marke, that the Apostle gave thanks and sent up prayers to God, not as he is an absolute God, but as hee is the father of Christ, and in him a father to all that belong to Christ. And this is the Apostles ordinary forme of prayer and thanksgiving in the beginning almost of every Epistle.

God is the father of Christ as he is God, and as hee is man.

How wee are to conceive of Christ in respect of Gods chosen.

Our

Dott. 3.
Prayers must
be offered up
to God in the
mediation of
Christ only.

Our lesson hence is this, that our prayers to God must in like manner be offered up in the name and mediation of Christ only. *There is one God, and as there is one God, so one mediator between God and man, which is the man Christ Jesus* 1 Tim. 2. 5. in his name only must we come to Gods throne. How the Papists doe cavill on this place it is knowne: say they, Christ is the only mediator of redemption, but the Saints are mediators of intercession: this distinction is most foolish, it makes the body not to answer to the shadow, nor the truth correspondent to the figures, for the high Priest in time of the law was in figure a mediator both of expiation by sacrifices, and of intercession by prayers, and did shadow and shew, that in the time of the new Testament both these things should be conioyned and meete together in Christ.

Againe it doth rob Christ of a great part of his honour belonging to his Priesthood, for Christ hath not only by his owne sufficient sacrifice, *consecrated for ever them that are sanctified.* Heb. 10. 14. but sits also at the right hand of his father, to make request for them, *Rom. 8. 32.* Christ his Priesthood is everlasting *Heb. 7. 24. 25.* therefore his intercession is perpetuall; it is the Apostles reason, and to this wee may ioine other reasons. First, we by reason of sinne, and because of our unworthinesse, are all chased from the throne of God, and wee are not able to stand before the throne of glory, till it be changed into a throne of grace, he therefore that is our mediator and intercessor to goe betweene God and us, must be able to take away sinne, and to procure righteousness, life and the favour of God. Christ onely is able to doe these things, therefore in his name onely must we offer up our prayers. Againe, he must be our mediator, in whose name we have promise to be heard: but in Christ only this promise is made, *Ioh. 14. 13. 14. Whatsoever ye shall aske in my name, that will I doe, that the father may be glorified in the Sonne. If ye shall aske any thing in my name, I will doe it.*

Obiect.

Obiect. We reade, *Rom. 8. 26. That the spirit it selfe makes request for us.* And *ver. 27. The spirit maketh request for the Saints:* therefore Christ is not our mediator only.

Answer.

The answer is easie, if we observe the words, and rightly understand them. For when the Apostle saith, *the spirit maketh request for us with groans,* we may not take it that the holy Ghost is subiect unto griefe or passion, but that he doth breath into the hearts of the faithfull, such motions whereby they doe earnestly cry unto God, he maketh or teacheth them to pray with most vehement desires, sighs, and groanings: and hence is he said to make request for them, as we have it, *Revel. 22. 17. The spirit and the bride say, Come:* not that the holy Ghost doth pray for the coming of Christ, but because hee enflameth the Church with a vehement desire of his coming; so it remaines a truth, that Christ only is our mediator and intercessor betweene God and us.

Vse 1.

In prayer to
God we must
be farre from a
conceit of any
worthinesse in
our selves.

To passe over the opinion of the Papists. First of all our meditation upon this point ought to be to this purpose: Are we come to God in prayer, in the name and mediation of Christ alone? must wee looke to be heard and respected of the Lord only, in, and for his beloved sonne Christ Iesus? then it ought to be farre from us, when wee come to God in prayes, to bee lift up in any the least conceit of any worthinesse in our selves: though we be regenerate, and though we bee the children of God and such as feare God, yet must wee not thinke to be heard for our faith, and for our feare of God: if wee doe, we come not in the mediation of Christ, for to come in his name and mediation, is not only in word to call on God through Iesus Christ, and to conclude our prayers with these words, commonly used at the shutting up of prayer (through Iesus Christ our Lord) but to offer up our prayers in the merit of his death the price of our redemption, and that cannot stand with any the least confidence in any thing in our selves.

Againe,

Againe, we comming in confidence of something in our selves, we come to a God cloathed with justice and judgement, ready to powre out his wrath upon us. Happily some will say, May wee not in our prayers stand upon it, and pleade it in the sight of God, that wee are his servants and children? Did not David thus? Psal. 86. 2. Did not Hezekiah thus frame his prayer, 2. King. 20. 3. *I beseech thee O Lord remember how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart?* Hath not God promised to heare and accept the prayers of his children.

Ans. David and Hezekiah in the places cited, did not plead the merit of their righteousness, but onely testifie that they were the children of God and regenerate, and such men as to whom God had promised to be good and gracious, they did only assure themselves that Gods promise of helpe and deliverance pertained to them in particular, because they were of that number. For as we have it, Psal. 34. 15. *The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his eares are open to their crye.* Thus farre as many as truly feare God may use the benefit of a good conscience and their owne integrity, to confirme them in the promises of God made to his children, their consciences bearing witness that they are such as truly feare God; they may hereupon comfort themselves with assurance that their prayers are pretious to the Lord. That is the use of the feare of God in the time of prayer, we are not to pleade to be heard for the feare of God, but to assure our hearts by it to be accepted in and through Christ.

Againe, the consideration of this may comfort us against a fiery dart of the devill, wherewith he many times troubles the weak, namely this, that they are unworthy vile and wretched: the devill will go about to perswade them, that they are so unworthy as they may not pray to God, nor expect any favour from him; in this case the weake Christian may comfort himselfe, and raise up his heart, and beat backe the assault of Satan with this, that he comes to God not in his owne name, nor any other name, but in the name of Christ, and in him his unworthinesse is covered: in and by him the throne of glory and justice is changed into a throne of grace, and therefore wee are not to be driven away from God in regard of our unworthinesse, but to be truly humbled for it, and to bewaile it, and in humble confession of it to come to God, who hath promised to have respect in Christ to such as are of broken and contrite hearts. In this description, *Father of our Lord Iesus Christ*, the Apostle further teacheth us how we are to conceive of Christ: the point of instruction is this:

That as many as acknowledge Christ their Iesus, must also acknowledge him their Lord, that is the right faith in Christ. We hold it an article of our faith and wee are taught as much by Christ himselfe, that such as come to him by faith, and finde comfort in him, must take his yoke on them, Matth. 11. 29.

How then doe they deceive themselves, and seeds upon fancie, who will have Christ to beare the burthen of their finnes, and yet never submit their necks to beare his yoke? a Redeemer they will have him, but not a Lord; they will have a portion in his redemption, but their own lusts must be their Lords; they will be saved by grace, & yet live the life of nature, follow after drunkennesse and all manner of prophanesse, as they are lead by the lusts of their owne hearts: let such know that they are bewitched with a strong delusion of the devill, they set up a Christ of their owne framing, and believe not in Christ propounded and set forth in the Gospell: for let them thinke on it with reason, can they imagine that they hold Christ their Lord, whom they daily despise and crucifie? I thinke they are not so fond and foolish. Now this they doe by their finnes, who continue hardened and unrepentant in their sins, therefore it is said, *One day shall they see him whom they have pierced*, Revel. 1. 7. If men hold not Christ a Lord, they cannot hold him a Saviour, for these two are conjoynd. If ever then we would finde comfort in Christ, we must learne to make him

Answer.

Vse 2.
Comfort against a fiery dart of Satan.

Doct. 4.
They that acknowledge Christ their Iesus, must also acknowledge him their Lord
Vse.

They deceive themselves, who will have Christ a Redeemer, but not a Lord.

Dott. 3.
When we pray
to God, wee
have also just
cause to praise
him, and so on
the contrary.

Vse.
Men are wan-
ting in the
practise of this
duty.

him our Lord, and suffer him to rule in our hearts and lives. Now to the last words of this verse, wherein the Apostle sets it downe in general, that he prayed, afterward expressing the particular matter of his prayers, and he sets it not down barely, that he prayed, but together with it, the time (alwaies) that is to say, ever when he called upon God for himself, he ceased not to pray for them, as he saith vers. 9. Not to say any thing of the time here mentioned, wee shall speake of it more fully, chap. 4. vers. 2. The point hence to be observed is this, In that the Apostle prayed for the Colossians, for whom hee gave thanks: by his example we are taught, that we are to lift up our prayers to God, even then when we have cause to praise God, when we have just cause to give thanks to God for good things in our selves or others, even then are we also to be humbled in prayer; for why? besides this that there is no man, who hath such a measure of gifts and good things, but that so long as he is in this world he hath his wants, and is to pray for a supply of them: besides this, prayer is a speciall meanes sanctified and appointed of the Lord, to procure and to bring downe his blessing on good things for the continuance and increase of them: yea such a meanes, as by it other meanes, which must not be neglected, receive a blessing from the Lord, good meanes serving for the continuance of good things unto us; used without prayer, are commonly crossed and cursed, because the Lord cannot away to bee made a servant to flesh and blood; but being used with prayer, they are blessed and they prosper. Therefore prayer must reach as farre as any matter of thanksgiving: what thing soever doe minister matter of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, the same give us just cause of prayer for a blessing upon them, and wee must take knowledge of this duty, and labour to practise it.

In the time of want men will fall on their knees, and call on the Lord; and with some men, want is more forcible to make them pray, then the commandement of God, Hos. 5. 15. The commandement came to Pharaoh, Exod. 5. 1. *Let my people goe, that they may celebrate a feast unto me in the wilderness:* but he in his ruffe and prosperity answered, *Who is the Lord?* yet afterward when hee was plagued, and his stomacke beaten downe with an iron rod, hee confessed the Lord, and desired Moses and Aaron to pray for him, Exod. 10. 17. Thus many in time of sickness, trouble, and distresse, will pray unto the Lord, but in time of health and plenty, in time of abundance, they are hardly drawne to this duty; nay, then they say unto God, as we have it, Iob. 21. 14. 15. *Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes.* Men many times promise unto themselves a perpetuity in their goods, as the rich man did, Luk. 12. 19: but wee know the answer of God unto him, vers. 20. *Then saile, this night will they take away thy soule from thee.* And take we heed we deserve not the same title. Would wee have sure and certaine hold of good things? then pray wee for the continuance of them, let our prayer reach as farre as wee have matter and cause of thanksgiving, even when Gods blessing is in our Tabernacles, as Iob speaketh, Iob. 29. 4. *and when we wash our paths with butter,* vers. 6. When we have the blessings of God in abundance, then are we to be humbled in prayer: and because wee are commonly carelesse of this duty in time of prosperity, know we, that if we lift up our hands and voices in prayer onely, when we are under the hand of God, that prayer is a prayer of nature, not of grace: for nature teacheth the bruit beast to groane under the burthen; when we are pinched, then nature teacheth us to cry for helpe, it is not a prayer of grace, and the free spirit of God; and such prayer may stand and go hand in hand with wilfull rebellion against God. The Lord saith, his people in time of a great dearth *assembled themselves for corne and wine, and yet they rebelled against him.* Hos. 7. 14. If then we would have our prayer a free-will-offering, and so pleasing unto God as a sweete fruite of his owne spirit, and a testimonie of our free obedience, wee must

must be carried to a quick and ready performance of it, even then when wee have matter of praise and thanksgiving.

Now come we to the fourth verse. Wherein are laid before us the things for which the Apostle gave thanks in the behalfe of the Colossians, namely, their faith & love, with the proper object of them both, of their faith, Christ Iesus, of their love, the Saints, and that generally towards all the Saints; and this matter of thanksgiving is farther amplified by the time, that since he heard of their faith and love, he gave thanks for them: that is the summe and substance of the verse; wherein first observe we the things for which the Apostle gave thanks, and those were not things of the world, outward things; but things spirituall, whence this conclusion followeth;

That our reioycing and giving of thanks to God in the behalfe of our friends (such as we are bound to tender & more entirely to respect) must especially be for spirituall things in them, for things pertaining to Gods kingdome, and such as accompany their salvation, as the holy Ghost speaketh, *Heb. 6. 9.* See we the Apostles reioycing in this kinde in lively colours, *2 Cor. 7. 6. 7.* hee there saith, he was filled with comfort, when hee heard by *Thus* of their mourning, their fervent desire, their godly sorrow, and the fruites of that, his ioy and reioycing was altogether for the graces of Gods spirit in them; his example ought to be our rule, we are chiefly to reioyce for spiritual good things found in our friends and the reason of this is; not onely for the excellency of those good things, being of their owne nature more excellent than outward good things, but because other good things are by them sweetened, and made truly comfortable to our friends; and without them, all other things are but so many waights to weigh downe their condemnation, to make it more heavy and intollerable unto them: we are therefore to give thanks to God, especially for spirituall good things in our friends.

Now this is contrary to the course and custome of the world: it is amongst men usuall in token of their love, to give thanks to God for the health, the wealth, the frugality and thrift of their children and friends; but few or none for their faith, love, repentance, humility, and other spirituall gifts and graces: this argues wee favour the things of the flesh, and not the things of the spirit: for as many as are regenerate and children of God, as they finde sweetnesse and comfort in spiritual graces in themselves, so they delight to see them in others: and againe they follow the rule of the Apostle, *1 Thess. 5. 18.* in all things they give thanks to God, even in every creature they finde out something whereby they are stirred up to magnifie the power, wisdom, and goodnesse of God, much more doe they finde matter of reioycing and thanksgiving to God, in the renewed image of God appearing in their friends, in their holinesse, their feare of God, their faith, their love, &c. If then we finde that we can reioyce and give thanks to God for our outward good things, and not for spirituall graces, it is a strong prooffe that our hearts are not yet seasoned with grace: and the consideration of this ought to stirre us up to the practise of this dutie.

Come we to a second thing, and that is this, in that these two, faith and love are conioyned, wee are taught, that faith in Christ for the remission of finnes, cannot but bring forth some measure of love both to God, and to all that beare Gods image: for though true sanctified love be not (as the Popish learning teacheth) the form of true faith, not concurring as a cause in the act of iustification, yet is there a necessary concurrence and concomitancy of faith and love in the person ustified: true faith pleasing to God and avallable to salvation, is ever fruitfull, and worketh by love in the life and conversation *Gal. 5. 6.* And we may safely say, it is as possible that the Sunne should have no light, the fire not burn, or the reasonable soule (which is immortall) not live, as that true faith

Verf. 4.

The things for which the Apostle gave thanks.

Doct. 1.

Our thanksgiving to God in behalfe of our friends, must be especially for spirituall good things in them.

Vse.

The course and custome of the world reprov'd.

Doct. 2.

Faith in Christ for remission of finnes ever brings forth some measure of love both to God and men.

Note.

Vse.
It is a deceit of
the flesh to
thinke that
true faith in
Christ may be
severed from
true love to
men.

Doct. 3.

We never find
in Scripture
mention of
faith and trust
in any but in
Christ and in
God.

Exception.

Answer.

faith and assurance of Gods mercy in Christ should not be fruitfull in thankfulness, in obedience, and many good duties of love both to God and man. Indeed love and holy obedience may bee diverced from that faith which the Papists teach to be true catholike faith, that being but a bare assent to the truth of the history, and such as may be in devils, can bring forth nothing but trembling, or at the most, admiration and amazement, as at the sight of some pageant or strange wonder: but that faith that hath the right life, and soule of a justifying and comfortable faith, that is an affiance and trust in Gods mercy in Christ, for the remission of finnes, and all other appendent blessings, temporall and eternall, cannot but send forth love, and many good fruits worthy amendment of life.

It is then (for the use of this) a sophisme, a deceit of the flesh forced upon men, by strong delusion of the devill, to thinke they have faith in Christ, and yet have not the least dramme of Christian love to their brethren: this is to thinke that faith in Christ for remission of finnes, and many finnes may dwell together, which is a thing impossible: they that thus thinke, never felt the power of Gods mercie in Christ; and they are yet in their finnes, whose hearts are possessed with such deceiving thoughts. Wee must know it for a truth from the mouth of the Apostle, 2 Pet. 1.9. He that doth not ioyne to his faith vertue, to his vertue knowledge, to his knowledge temperance, to his temperance patience, to his patience godlinesse, to his godlinesse brotherly kindnesse, to his brotherly kindnesse love: he is blinde and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old finnes. Doth he not remember nor thinke on the power of the blood of Christ, which is able not only to wash away the guilt and punishment of sinne, but to purge out the corruption of sinne? If we have a right faith in Christ, if we have a right apprehension of the blood of Christ, it will certainly make our hearts pliable and obedient to God, and tender, loving and sincerely affected towards men. Can we thinke that any mans heart is washed in the blood of Christ, and yet it remaineth full of the poyson of sinne? no certainly, never was any heart bathed in the blood of Christ, but thereby it was suppled and made tenderly affected towards all the Saints and members of Christ. Therefore let no man deceive himselfe in this point.

Now to the object of faith and love, and first of faith (Christ Iesus) where, in a word marke we the phrase used by the Apostle, he saith not, they beleaved Christ, but in Christ: a phrase ever in Scripture used to expresse true faith and affiance, standing in relation to Christ and to God: wee shall never finde mention of faith, affiance, and trust in any, but in Christ and in God.

This I note to shew the strength of our argument, against invocation of Angels and Saints. When we reason with the Apostle and say, that we cannot call on them, because we cannot beleave in them, Rom. 10. 14. Against this, exception is made by our adversaries the Papists. No, say they? May we not beleave in men? Why? what say you to that, Exod. 14. 31. *They feared the Lord, and beleaved the Lord, and his servant Moses.* Again, doe we not reade in the Epistle to Philemon, the fifth verse, the Apostle saith: *be heard of his love and faith which he had toward the Lord Iesus and toward all his Saints:* Behold (say they) the Scripture teacheth faith in Moses, and faith in the Saints. Wee answer; In that place of Exodus the words are not, *in God and in Moses*; but, *they beleaved God and his servant Moses*, that is, they gave credit to the Lord and to Moses his servant, they gave credit unto the word hee had spoken unto them, ver. 13. 14. and so their owne translation hath it, *crediderunt Domino & Moysi*, &c. and cannot otherwise be expressed in Greeke or Latin, as their owne vulgar interpreter hath well observed. The like place we have, 2 Chron. 20. 20. *Hear ye me O Iudah, and ye inhabitants of Ierusalem, trust in the Lord, and beleave his Prophets*, that is, give credit to the word of the Prophets, and ye shall prosper.

prosper. For the second place wee answer, that any man (who is not wilfully blinde) may see that faith is there referred to Christ, and love to the Saints. Againe, the Apostle speaks of the Saints living, not departed, as appeares ver. 7. therefore that place cannot make for Popish faith and believe in Saints departed; neither can they finde any place of Scripture, so much as by implication, teaching faith, or trust and affiance in men, be they never so good, but rather the contrary, the Lord hath set a curse on that man that trusteth in men. *Jerem.*

17.5.

Now farther, touching the object of that faith that is here signified. Faith, trust and affiance, the object of it is said to be Christ Iesus: whence we may gather, that true iustifying faith is fixed and bounded on Christ Iesus only, though faith in a generall signification being a word of relation respecting things to be beleaved, have reference to the whole word of God, and have for the materiall object of it, every truth recorded in the word: yet, as it is an instrument of iustification; it beholdeth the speciall mercy of God in Christ: it apprehendeth Christ and his merits, the merit of his innocency, the merit of the holy and perfect obedience of his life, the infinite merit of his satisfactory death, and hence it is called the faith of Iesus, *Rom.* 3. 26. And this is to be marked, because in this respect only is faith said to iustifie, faith doth not iustifie as a quality inherent in us, for any excellency or merit in it selfe, nor any action of faith of it selfe, but only by relation to the object, because it taketh hold of the merit of Christ, and doth apprehend and apply his perfect righteousness unto us, as the hand receiving gold or silver given, makes not rich, nor the worke of the hand in the act of receiving by it selfe, but the gold or the silver. So it is not faith nor the worke of faith that doth iustifie, but Christ, whom by faith we apprehend, the matter of our iustification, as the Apostle hath taught us, *God hath made him to be sinne for us, which knew no sinne, that wee might bee made the righteousness of God in him,* 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. And this being so, it must teach us:

First, to take heed of the doctrine of the Church of Rome, who say, Faith doth iustifie indeed; but how? not by relation to Christ the object of it, but as an excellent vertue bringing forth many divine and gracious motions in our hearts, as the feare of hell, love of God, a consideration and a desire of life eternal, and so fitting and preparing us, and making us worthy, *ex congruo*, to receive grace and iustification; a doctrine devillish and dangerous, flat contrary to the truth now delivered, and contrary to that opposition made by the Apostle. *Rom.* 3. 27. 28. where he opposeth beleaving and working; faith and works, therefore faith as a work or excellent vertue doth not iustifie, for then the Apostles opposition is overthrowne, then beleaving and working might stand together, which are made opposite, and cannot in the act of iustification stand together.

Againe (for the second use) if faith doe not iustifie as an excellent quality, for any excellency or merit in it selfe, but only by relation to the object of it Christ Iesus, then as many as will (indeed) be iustified in the sight of God, and eternally saved, must learne utterly to renounce all things in themselves: and there is good reason for it, for if other qualities and workes bee so farre forth good, as they come from faith, and faith it selfe, as a quality or worke, doth not iustifie us in the sight of God, then much lesse can any other grace or worke doe it. It is the pride of our corrupt nature to looke for iustification and salvation by some thing in our selves: if we live in civill fashion in the world, and we hurt none, &c. then wee are lift up in a conceit of this, and we thinke wee cannot chuse but bee saved. Thus the devill taking advantage of our pride, doth teach men to encroach upon the doctrine of the holy Ghost: for where-as he hath taught, that good life and honest conversation serves only as an evidence and necessarie proofe of true faith in the blood of Christ, the devill teacheth

Doll. 4.

True iustifying
faith is fixed &
bounded on
Christ Iesus

Vse 1.

Confutation
of the Papists
touching the
manner how
faith doth iu-
stifie.

Vse 2.

Such as will be
iustified in
Gods sight and
saved eternally
must renounce
all things in
themselves.

cheth to advance these things to a higher place of dignity, even to shoulder out Gods grace and merits of Christ in our justification: but we must know, as the Apostle hath taught us, if we look to be justified by anything in our selves, wee are abolished from Christ, *Gal. 5.4* Faith in Christ Iesus and confidence in good works cannot stand together. Faith and good workes ever goe together, and true faith is ever fruitfull in good works; but faith and confidence, or opinion of the merit of good workes, cannot stand together. If we looke to be justified and saved by Christ, we must cleave only unto him, and utterly renounce confidence of all things in our selves; we must iudge our selves, and condemn our selves in regard of anything in us; and plead nothing but mercy and forgiveness; we must goe out of our selves, and fixe our faith upon Iesus Christ, and be fully perswaded in our hearts, that his death is our ransome, his righteousness our righteousness, and make him our perfect Saviour and Redeemer, build upon him as a rocke that never can bee shaken, and then the gates of hell shall never prevaile against us. And so much of the object of faith.

Doct. 5.

Sanctified love must be expressed in the fruits of it, chiefly to such as are sanctified and to all such.

Now come we to the object of love, that is, (all Saints) True sanctified love comming from faith is to be extended in the fruits of it to all men, as they are men bearing the image of God, but especially, to such as are sanctified and renewed according to Gods image in some measure of holinesse: and it must bee reached generally to all Saints, as the Colossians did; so we are not only to love one or two, or a certaine set number, but all Saints without exception: we are to beare hearty affection to all generally, and to expresse it in duties of love, to as many as we are able, *saith David, Psal. 16.2.3. Lord my well doing extendeth not to thee, but to the Saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, and he speaks indefinitely, to the Saints that are here on earth, and to the excellent.* Reasons of this are these. First, all the Saints are members of one body, and it is a law laid on the members of the naturall body by the providence of God, that what ability is given to any member, it should be used for the good of the whole body, and of every part of the body: that the sight of the eye should bee used as well for the direction of the foot, as for the guiding of the hand. So in the mysticall body of Christ, what good practicall grace or affection is wrought in any, it should be extended to the good of the whole body, and of every particular member of the body. Secondly, there is the same reason and ground of love in every Saint of God; namely, the image of God renewed: their holinesse and feare of God, though not the same measure: they all resemble God their Father in some degree of holinesse, and shew that they are begotten of the immortall seed of his word: therefore love being bounded and set on goodnesse, and that being found in some measure in every Saint of God, we are to extend our love to all and every Saint and servant of God.

Quest.

But for the better clearing of this point, a question must be answered, namely this: seeing we are to love all the Saints of God, the question may bee whether we are to love them all alike or no?

Ans.

First, in respect of the different degrees of men, there must bee different degrees of love: the Magistrate and the Minister being publique persons fearing God, are to bee loved with a greater measure of love then private persons, because they beare a double image of God, inward in sanctified grace, outward in place and authority. Secondly, in equall comparison, when men are equal in degree: we are then in the first place, principally to love and shew duties of love to parents, children, and such as are conioyned and tyed unto us by nature, or any outward bond of marriage or friendship, because wee are bound to love them by a double bond, of nature, and of grace: grace doth not abolish naturall affection, but only order it and dispose it aright, and so the question is answered and the doctrine cleared.

Is.

Is it so that we are to love all the Saints of God? then farre be it from us to love

love one and hate another: that language and speech ought not bee heard out of our mouthes, I love such a one even from my heart, because hee is an honest man, but such an one happily as honest as I cannot abide, and it may bee we cannot abide him, even because hee is one that in our conceit is too forward in the feare of God: are we not in this case become partiall in our selves? I am. 1. 4. And if our love be thus partiall, we love one Saint of God, and not another, let our pretence be what it will, that we love him, because he is an honest man, in deed and truth we love him, not as a Saint, not for God, and his graces in him, but in some other respect either for pleasure or profit; it is not possible for us to love one as a Saint and fearing God, but we must love all that feare God, because all in their measure have in them that which is truly amiable and lovely. Again, if we love some, and not others, we make it plaine; wee yet love not God: can we perswade our selves that we love God, and love not some whom he loveth? can a man say he loves his friend, and yet hate any one of his children? no certainly he cannot: no more can we truly say we love God, if we hate any one of his children. *If any man say I love God, and yet hate his brother, he is a childe of him that is the father of lies, 1 Ioh. 3. 10. In this are the children of God knowne, and the children of the devill, who soever doth not righteously, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.* Let then the consideration of these things stirre us up to put away partiall affection, let us beare and shew hearty love to all the Saints of God, so we may have testimony that our love is sanctified, and that we love God, and from thence may rise up to an assurance of his love in Iesus Christ. Now to the fifth verse.

Verf. 5. For the hopes sake, which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye have heard before by the word of truth, which is the Gospell.

Partiall love
of others re-
proved
will increase
and, therefore
not good from
it to counsel

Verf. 5
The hope
laid up for
you in heaven
is the reward
of the righteous
in the next
world

IN this verse, the Apostle doth lay before us two things: First, wherefore it was that the Colossians continue constant in their faith in Christ Iesus and love towards all Saints. What was the motive that stirred them up to goe on in faith and love? namely, the hope laid up for them in heaven. Secondly, the meanes how they came to the knowledge of that hope, and that was by their hearing of the Gospell, which is described to be the word of truth: and their hearing of this hope, by the preaching of the Gospel, is further amplified by the time that they heard of it, before the writing of this Epistle: whereof (saith the Apostle) ye have heard before. Come we to the first of these two general things in these words, *For the hopes sake*: by (*hope*) in this place wee are to understand, not the gift or grace of hope wrought in true beleevers following true faith, but the thing hoped for, the thing certainly expected of all that truly beleeve eternall happinesse, glory and life everlasting, and that is cleere out of the text it selfe, because the gift or grace of hope is in the heart, but this is here said to be laid up in heaven: (*laid up*) that phrase is borrowed from parents, who lay up good things to be given in time to come to their children: the meaning is, that the Lord hath as it were laid up, provided and prepared life, happinesse and glory in time to be given to his children: so we finde it in the last doome that Christ shall pronounce upon the blessed of his father: *Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, Mat. 25. 34.*

In heaven. That is, in the place and seat of the blessed Angels and Saints, whither Christ is ascended, and from whence he shall come to judgement: this then is the true sense of these words, for the eternall happinesse, life and glories like prepared of the Lord from all eternity in time to be given you in the highest heavens. Now first, in that glory and life to come is called by the name of hope one of these is put for another, one to signifie another, hope to signifie heaven.

True Christian hope must not only have reference to life eternall, but must be a resemblance of it.

Vse.
Triall of our hope of life and salvation in heaven.

Hence we may take up this conclusion, that true Christian hope, or the hope of true Christians, must not only have reference to life eternall, but it must be a resemblance of life hoped for, and in some sort be correspondent unto it: for as in metonymicall and sacramentall speeches, when one thing is set downe to signifie another, there is a resemblance and similitude betweene those things, as the bread in the Sacrament resembleth the body of Christ; so our hope being put for heaven, it must be a resemblance of heaven, it must in some sort expresse eternall life laid up for us in heaven. How can that be, may some say? Answ. By working in us even in this life a beginning of life eternall, by making our life and conversation heavenly, as the Apostle speakes, in heaven, Philip 3. 20. then is our hope a lively image fit to resemble life eternall, when it is manifested in the beginnings of life eternall, when it is effectuell to turne us from sinne to God, and to worke in us newnesse and holinesse of life. And, that true Christian hope is such a resemblance of eternall life, and is thus effectuell and so ought to be in us, marke that place of the Apostle, *our conversation* (saith hee) *is in heaven*. What is his ground? even our hope of the glorification of our bodies, and fulnesse of glory at the comming of Christ: for hee saith in the words following, *from whence we looke for a Saviour, even the Lord Iesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be like his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himselfe*. Wee have a plaine text to this purpose: saith S. John 1 Ioh. 3. 3. *We know that when hee shall appear we shall be like him: and every man that hath this hope in him, purgeth himselfe, even as he is pure*. Whosoever hath true hope, he is thereby stirred up unto daily repentance and reformation of life.

Now for the use of this, there is never a one of us of yeares and of discretion, but we will say, we hope for life eternall, and we looke for happinesse, and glory in heaven by the mercie of God in Christ. But would any know whether his hope be a true Christian hope or no, such a hope as will not deceive nor disappoint him in time of need, no not in death it selfe? let him then examine it by this note; if his hope be a resemblance of life eternall, if it doe expresse in his life the beginnings of that life laid up in heaven in some measure of puritie, holinesse, innocency, meeknesse, and love, &c. so that a man may say of him, as we use to speak of a childe towardly and of an ingenious countenance, that he is *optima spei*, one of excellent hope; then his hope is indeed religious and Christian, such as will comfort him when the pangs of death are upon him. But if otherwise he say, he hopes for life and salvation, and yet be not able to shew it in some conformity, similitude, and likenesse unto life eternall, but his life is rather an expresse image of his naturall corruption; his life is stained with many foule finnes; that mans hope, is but a pretence of hope, and in the end it will deceive and make him ashamed. Can a man say, and that truly, hee hopes for heaven, and yet his very breath stinks of hell? he breathes and belches out blasphemous oathes, raylings, cursings, slanderings, &c. and hath his tongue set on fire with the fire of hell, as S. James saith, third chapter, vers. 6. Can any say that hee lookes up to heaven, and beholds the fulnesse of happinesse and glory in heaven? and yet his eyes are full of adultery, as the Apostle speakes, 2 Pet. 2. 14. We know we cannot see the Sunne when a thicke cloud is before it; and can we imagine that we see the brightnesse of glory in heaven, through the thicke foggie mist of many finnes? It is not possible: our Saviour hath said it. Mat. 5. 8. that onely the pure in heart, such as are purged both from the guiltinesse, and filthinesse of their sins, shall see by their faith in this life the comfortable beams of the Lords loving countenance shining upon them in Christ, and shall see him face to face, even the brightnesse of his glory, to their eternall comfort in the life to come.

In the second place, in that the Apostle doth testifie that he heard of constancy

stancy of the Colossians in their faith and love: towards all Saints for the glories sake laid up for them in heaven: we are taught that it is the stedfast looking into heaven, that doth keep and hold true beleevers in a constant course of religion, it is that which makes them cleave fast to Christ, and keepe fellowship and communion with the Saints: for though wee are not to depart from sinne, or doe good, for this end only or principally that we may obtaine eternall life, for then we shall never obtaine it, because this end and purpose proceeds from selfe-love, though we are not to avoid evill or doe good, chiefly in respect of reward or feare of punishment, but in respect of Gods glory and our owne duty; yet in the duty of religion and love, wee may have an inferiour, subordinate and second respect unto the recompence of reward: and to make us constant in well doing, life everlasting must ever be in our eye, at which wee must continually aime. We reade, Heb. 11. that *Mosar esteemed the rebuke of Christ greater riches, then the treasures of Egypt.* For why? (saith the text) *he had respect unto the recompence of reward.* And ver. 27. *He forsooke Egypt, and feared not the fiercenesse of the King, for he endured as he that saw him which is invisible.* He had his eye upon heaven, and upon God in heaven, the rewarder of them that seeke him, and by faith depend upon him, and that made him lightly esteeme the troubles and trials of this life, and not to feare the rage and fury of *Pharaoh*, or of any man living;

Would we then (for use of this) stand fast in our profession of faith? would we be constant in religion, and the feare of God, amidst the troubles and miseries of this life, yea in the midst of many violent assaults and strong tentations of Satan? then learne we to cast our hope, the anchor of our soules, as the holy Ghost calls it, Heb. 6. 19. within the vaile of heaven, let us lift up the eyes of our mindes, and fasten them on that glory and blisse that is prepared and laid up in heaven for all them that love the appearing of the Lord Iesus, then we shall be able to put upon us *Iobs* resolution, Job. 13. 15. *Though the Lord should kill me, yet would I trust in him:* and in the houre of tentation and pangs of death, wee shall cleave fast unto Christ by faith, and hold our communion with the Saints. It is not possible that such as professe faith and religion, and yet mind earthly things and have their mindes groveling on the things of this world, & professe in respect of wealth, that they should hold out in faith and in the feare of God. In the time of triall & tentation, the devil could thus reason: *Doubt Iobs feare God for naught?* Job. 1. 9. as if he said, *Iobs* feare and service of God is but in respect of his wealth and prosperity, therefore lay but thine hand upon him, and he will start aside from his feare, hee will then shew himselfe to bee but an hypocrite. Though the devill was deceived in *Iob*, yet he hath shewed by this manner of reasoning, that hee knowes well that such as professe in respect of wealth and outward prosperity, they are soone driven from their profession, by the least tryall or tentation. Therefore this ought to stirre us up in our profession, to respect chiefly the glory of God and our duty, and then labour to fix our eyes on the marke and price of the high calling of God in Christ Iesus, that so wee may be constant and persever in time of triall and tentation, which may come upon us we know not how soone. It followeth (*laid up*): this phrase (as hath beene shewed) is borrowed from parents, to bring within the compasse of our understanding the Lords eternall decree, and purpose, to bestow life and glory upon his children: our instruction hence is easily gathered, namely this: in that life and glory is laid up with the Lord in his eternall counsell.

We may conclude, it shall in time be given to such as truly beleeve in Christ, and hold fellowship and communion with the Saints, it is laid up for them, they shall not misse of it, they may certainly expect it. Our Apostle doth thus build upon it, that hee having finished his course and kept the faith, thenceforth was laid up for him the crowne of righteousness, and that the Lord the righteous

Doct. 2.

The stedfast looking into heaven doth keepe true beleevers in a constant course of religion.

Use.

We must learn to cast our hope as the anchor of our soules within the vaile of heaven.

Doct. 3.

Such as truly beleeve in Christ, and hold communion with the Saints may

certainly looke
for life and
glory in hea-
ven.

Vs. 1.
Comfort to all
that truly be-
leeve in Christ,

Vs. 2.
Expectation of
life, comfort,

Judge would give it unto him, at the day of his departure, out of this life and not onely to him, but to all them also that love his appearing, 2 Tim. 4. 8. Wee may further be resolved of this truth by considering the end, why naturall parents provide and lay up good things for there children, applying that by way of similitude to the Lord: for what is their intent and purpose, in their providing, laying up, and carefull keeping of good things? surely in time to endow and to enrich their children, and it is either change of affection, or want of ability, that makes void their purpose, either because their love is turned into hatred, or because they are not able to doe that they purposed: now the Lord having purposed and intended from all eternitie in time to endow and enrich his children with treasures of eternall life and glory; what is it that may frustrate and make void his purpose? Is it change of his love? not possible: his love is essentiall in him, as unchangeable as himselfe, he loves for ever whom hee loves once. Is it want of power? we cannot so imagine, he is omnipotent, the God of all power; nothing in heaven, earth, or hell, is able to withstand or hinder him from effecting his purpose: therefore happinesse and eternall glory being intended by him to his children in his eternall love that never changeth, laid up for them under his hands, and keeping, who is able to keep and to bestow it at his good pleasure, and that in heaven a place of all safety and security, where it cannot be corrupted, stained, wax old, or waste and weare away, as the Apostle saith, 1. Pet. 1. 4. It must needs in time come to them for whom it is prepared and appoynted of the Lord, that is, to such as beleeve and hold fellowship and communion with the Saints: a matter for the use of it of great comfort to all that truly beleeve, to them only the comfort of it doth belong.

First therefore, let our meditation in this point be to this purpose: Is life and glory laid up for us, in time to be given unto us? then let us not be dismayed and utterly dejected, though we lose all that ever we enjoy in this world: farr be it from us, upon the losse of the transitory and fading things of this world, to cry out and say, we are utterly undone, how shall we doe? whither shall wee turne our selves? Let these distempered speeches (arguing want of hope) be heard out of the mouthes of such as want hope, and be farre from us: let not us feare what man or devill can doe unto us; it is the encouragement our Saviour gives upon this very ground; *Fear not little flocke, for it is your fathers pleasure to give you the kingdome*, Luke 12. 32. Every word hath the weight of an argument, as if he had said, *Fear not the losse or want of earthly things*, (he there handleth the argument of Gods providence) it is your kinde and loving father that doth render your estate and hath a care of it, it standeth with his good will & pleasure freely to give (without any merit of yours) the kingdome, that is, that heavenly kingdome prepared for you; why then should you feare? *Nay*, saith he, ver. 4. of that chapter, *I say unto you, be not afraid of them that kill the body*, that is, feare not them that are able to take away your temporall lives, they can goe no farther, they cannot strip you of life eternal, that is beyond their reach, they cannot enter upon your soules to hurt them, they are your freeholds, free from the rage and violence of Satan, and all his instruments. *Nay*, yet more then this, in that life and glory is laid up in time to be given us if we beleeve in Christ. We may hence receive further comfort, though it be so that our braynes be dashed against the wals, our bones scattered in the streets, our blood runne downe the channell, yet our bodies so mangled and martyred, shall be raysed againe, restored by the power of God, and be crowned together with our soules with happinesse and glory, and our tongues shall send forth the praise of him that sitteth upon the throne with majesty and honour for ever, &c. That is our first use of this, that life and glory is laid up, and in time shall be given unto us.

Again, secondly the consideration of this may strengthen us in our expectation, of life, and comfort, and deliverance in time of trouble, and distresse, that

that in the Lords good time we shal not faile of ease, comfort, and deliverance. for why? hath the Lord laid up eternall life and glory in time to bee given us, shall we not misse of it, may we certainly expect it? so also hath the Lord laid up ease, comfort, deliverance, &c. for all his distressed children in his good time to be given unto them, and as we are to waite with *Iob. Iob. 14. 14. all the daies of our appointed time*, till our last changing shall come, our changing from misery and sinne to happinesse and glory; so are we in all times of trouble and distresses, to wait till our changing shall come from the Lord, till it please the Lord to *give us beauty for ashes, the oyle of ioy for mourning. Isa. 61. 3.* To change our sorrow into ioy, our sicknesse into health, and to deliver us out of our distresse. It is a fruit of our corruption to be impatient of delay, to make haste to be delivered, and to seek by unlawful meanes, as the fashion of some is, in present trouble, they must have present helpe, or else they will fetch it from hell it selfe, by meanes of Witches, Sorcerers, and suchlike. Let them know, whosoever they be, that are thus hastie, that this is a manifest demonstration of their want of faith, and trust in God for life eternall. Shall wee say, we trust God upon his word for happines in heaven, and yet trust him not upon his promise for help in time of need? Can we perswade our selves that wee beleeeve there is life and glory laid up in store with the Lord in time to be given us, and yet not beleeeve there is comfort and deliverance with the Lord in time of trouble? No, no: if we trust not God for the lesse, we cannot trust him for the greater: either then trust in the Lord in time of trouble, and with patience expect comfort from him, or else thou hast not yet learned to waite upon his mercy for salvation; and remember the words of the Prophet, *Isa. 28. 26. He that beleeueth, makes not haste: an infallible character and badge of him that beleeves is this, he makes not haste. If thou then make haste, thou beleevest not.*

Now here a question must be answered, in that the Apostle saith, *life and glory is laid up*: some may demand, how this can agree with that, *Mat. 6. 20. where beleevers are bidden by Christ, to lay up treasures for themselves in heaven: where by treasures, is meant eternall glory: and if that be laid up, how then can they themselves lay it up?*

For answer, we must learne to distinguish and make a difference betweene the essence and substance of glory, and the degree and measure of glory. Now the first of these is meant in this place, that the substance of glory standing in the fruition of the presence of God, fellowship and society with God the Father, Sonne and holy Ghost, and with the Angels and Saints, is laid up for true beleevers: but the measure of glory may be laid up, and may bee increased by themselves, they by their good workes of faith may treasure up a greater measure and degree of glory, a greater reward in heaves which shall be given, not for the merit of their workes, but of the mere mercy of God, who in the day of retribution will crowne his owne gifts, not our merits: and where he findes greater measure of gifts, greater measure of the workes of faith, there hee will in mercy bestow greater measure of glory, according to that of the Apostle, *2 Cor. 9. 6. He that soweth sparingly, shall reape sparingly: he that soweth liberally, shall reape liberally. And as he saith, 1 Cor. 15. 14. as one sheweth in brightness from another: so there shall bee greater measure of glorie in one Saint than in another, according to the measure of the workes of faith. This I take to bee the meaning of our Saviour, in saying, lay up treasures for your selves in heaven: that is, treasure for our selves, a measure of glory, and adde one measure to another as men in heaping and hoarding up riches, adde one shilling and one pound to another.*

Now further, in that the Apostle saith, the happinesse of true beleevers is laid up for them in heaven, hee would have it knowne that they have it not in present possession, but in reversion, in hope and expectation: they live here

& deliverance
in time of trouble
strengthened.

Quest.

Ans.

Doct. 4.
True beleevers
have not their
happinesse in
present possession,
but in reversion.

by

Vse.
We must lift
up our hearts
and affections
to the highest
heavens.

by faith and not by sight, 2 Cor. 5. 7. and as Saint John saith, 1 Iohn 3. 2. It yet appears not how glorious they shall bee, though the Lord give them a taste of Heaven in this life in the first fruits of the Spirit, in peace of conscience and ioy in the holy Ghost to comfort and stay their hearts, yet they must expect full fruition of happinesse in Heaven in the life to come,

Our use of this, is, that which the Apostle hath taught Chapter 3. 2. that seeing our happinesse and fulnesse of ioy and comfort is not in any thing under the Sunne, but laid up in the highest Heavens, we therefore should lift up our hearts thither, and set our affections on things which are above. And to helpe us forward and to stirre up our dulnesse in this respect, consider wee but these two things. First, to set our affections on earthly things, it is such an high degree of sin, as our Apostle could not think of it, but with a bleeding heart, nor speak of it, but with teares trickling downe his cheekes, Philip. 3. 18. 19. and marke the steps by which he comes unto it, *Many walke (saith hee) of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the crosse of Christ, whose end is damnation, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is to their shame, which mind earthly things.* Again, to set our affections on the things of this world, will not only make us lose the hold that we seeme to have of Heaven (for we cannot compass Heaven and Earth together) but the very remembrance of Heaven. experience shewes this; for speake to a worldly minded man, of the ioyes of the life to come, of the eternall waight of glory that shal be revealed, and he is no more moved then a stone in the wall, he hath no apprehension of it; if then we would not aspire to that high degree of sinne, that will make an honest heart bleed to thinke or speake of it: if we would not lose the hold we seeme to have of Heaven, and the very remembrance of Heaven, let us lift up our hearts and our affections, and not suffer them to settle and rest on earthly things, let us use them as travellers, to helpe us forward in our journey towards Heaven; but let our chiefe care and affection be on Heaven and heavenly things, and so much of the first generall part of this verse, in these words *(for the hopes sake.*

Now to the second part of it, in the words following (*whereof ye have heard before, by the word of truth which is the Gospell.*) The words need no long exposition, the word *Gospell*, is a word well knowne to every one in sound, but happily to few in sense and signification. It signifieth in generall good tidings, but in specciall the tidings or promulgation of the free grace and mercy of God in Christ, it is an evidence or declaration of Gods covenant of grace, it signifieth that part of the word of God, that containes the promise of remission of sinnes and life everlasting, made to all that truly beleve in Christ, and repent of their sinnes: it is called the word of truth, or (as the words are) of that truth, in a double respect. First, because it is of absolute and infallible truth without error, being published first by God, who is truth it selfe, after by Prophets and Apostles, to whom it was revealed by inspiration and instinct of the holy Ghost, and by them preached and written without error. Secondly, by a kinde of excellency above the law, because it doth containe and publish that eternall and saving truth, whereby we come to the knowledge of righteousnesse and salvation by Christ, which we could not have by the law, nor was ever revealed by the law. Here first we are to observe that the Colossians heard of life and glory laid up in Heaven for them by the Gospell, and so came to the knowledge of it, whence it followeth: that the knowledge of life eternall comes by hearing, it is not in us by nature, but it enters in by the eare, the listning and lending of the eare to the word preached, is the ordinary outward meanes, wherby knowledge of salvation is wrought in the heart: for saving faith which comprehends both knowledge of Gods mercy, and affiance in his mercy, by which we are saved, comes by hearing, Rom. 10. 17. when Adam fell from God, hee knew what blessing hee had

Doct. 5.
Knowledge of
life eternall
comes by
hearing.

had lost, and into what misery he was fallen, that was, the knowledge of good and evil, the devill promised, and he got, but he had no sight of rising, no knowledge of restoring to the state of grace and salvation, till he heard it from the mouth of the Lord, that the seed of the woman should breake the serpents head and so by nature there is no knowledge of salvation, but a sight of everlasting death and damnation, indeed the heathen groaped after happiness, and dreamed of *Elisian fields*, but had no true sight of it, till it was revealed to them by the sound of the Gospel.

Hence then learne wee what precious account we are to make of hearing of the word. Is it so that by hearing of it we come to faith, and knowledge of salvation? Then thinke that our eares are put to the best use when they are hearing of the word, for then they are exercised in a business that tends to the saving of our soules; and let us not with giddy headed Monkes, and swelling Enthusiasts, thinke basely of hearing, and thinke we shall come to the knowledge of salvation, by idle visions and phantasticall revelations; they bragge much of dreames and private illumination of the spirit, and seioyne the word and spirit which the Apostle hath coupled together: hee calls his preaching the manifestation of the Spirit, 2 Cor. 3. 8. to note that the word and spirit are so neerly conioyned, that they must alwayes goe together, the spirit shineth in the word, and the word is powerfull by the spirit, and we must be taught of God, but it must be by the word: the Lord puts them together, *Isai. 19. 21. I will make this my covenant with them saith the Lord, my spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth;* and by reason of this conjunction of the word and spirit, the preaching of the word is an instrument of grace and salvation, therefore we are not to depend upon visions and revelations from heaven, but to make precious account of hearing the word. And againe, let us not with contemners of the word reason thus, if I be appoynted unto life and salvation I shall come unto it as well as they that heare all the sermons in the world; that is a dangerous rocke on which many soules suffer shipwracke. Rather reason thus with thyselfe, am I carelesse of the meanes the Lord hath appoynted to bring me to the knowledge of salvation. Then I may iustly feare that I belong not to Gods election: for, whom the Lord hath appoynted to such an end, he hath appoynted to the meanes, and doth sweetly incline and bend the purpose of the will that way; whom hee hath predestinated, them hee hath called by the preaching of his Word, *Rom. 8. 30. It is the subtilty and cunning of the devill to worke in the heart a perswasion of indifferency, where the Lord by his ordinance hath laid a necessity, that the hearing of the word which the Lord hath appointed a necessary outward meanes to bring to the knowledge of salvation, is but a thing indifferent, and to perswade that a man may be saved, though he be carelesse of the meanes of salvation.*

Let us learne to take heed of this subtilty, consider and take wee but a short view of the state of such as lightly regard the hearing of the word, they walk in the darkenesse and vanity of their minds, they rush into errors, break out into blasphemies, runne into all sorts of sinne, they degenerate into the nature of brut beasts, and grow worse then they. For why? they have no strength against the corruption of their owne hearts, nor any power of grace to withstand the temptation of Satan, but with full swing run after the vanities of the world, and the pleasures of sinne and so lie open to Gods wrath, which hangs over the heads of all beleivers, being destitute of Christ the robe of righteousness, wanting faith, mortification, sanctification, and the whole armour of God, a state wretched and damnable: let the consideration of it move us to make a speciall account of hearing the word, whereby our iudgements may be informed, our wills reformed, our affections ordered, and every thought brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

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Dott. 6.

The doctrine of the Gospel is that which brings men to the knowledge of their salvation.

Reason.

In the second place we are to mark that the Colossians came to the knowledge of life and glory, laid up for them in heaven, by hearing the Gospel; whence we learne, that the doctrine of the Gospel, the doctrine of remission of finnes, and life everlasting by Christ exhibited in the flesh, is that in particular, which brings men to the knowledge of their salvation.

For why, the Gospel of Christ is the only Charter and Evidence of that heavenly Inheritance, that is prepared for them that shall be saved. It is not the booke of the creatures, the visible frame of the world, that can reveale or make it knowne, that serves onely to leave men without excuse, Rom. 1. 20. It is not any extraordinary worke of Gods iustice, any of his iudgements which are reall and visible sermons, they bring not to the knowledge of mercy, neither is it the hearing of the Law, because there is no seed of faith. either in the law of nature, nor any revelation of it by the morall law of God: the law is no instrumentall cause of faith, repentance, or any other saving grace: the morall law is called by the Apostle a killing letter, the minister of death and condemnation, 2. Cor. 3. 7. 9. and the Gospel is there said to give life, and is called the ministration of righteousness and of the Spirit. And indeed it is the hearing of the Gospel that doth conferre the *Spirit of adoption*, as the Apostle saith, Gal. 3. 2. Hence is the Gospel called the word of life, Act. 5. 20. the word of salvation Act. 13. 26. and therefore the hearing of the Gospel onely brings the knowledge of life and salvation.

Quest.

Answer.

Whereto then serves the hearing of the law?

The Apostle makes answer, Galath. 3. 24. *as our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ*, to bring men to the knowledge and feeling of sinne, and to the knowledge of the curse, and punishment due to the same, without remedy, and so to compell them to goe to Christ, set forth unto them in the Gospel. The point then being cleere, the use of it is this:

Vse. 1.

Who they be that doe truly and rightly preach the Gospel.

First, it maketh knowne who they be that doe truly and rightly preach the Gospel; namely, they who doe aime and drive at that, and in some measure effect that which is the proper worke of the Gospel; that is, bring men to faith in Christ, and certaine knowledge of their owne salvation. The popish teaching, that holds men in suspence, and makes men doubt of their owne salvation, and gives them no certaine light, nor knowledge of life and glory laid up for them in heaven, is not the true teaching: The Gospel is then truly preached, when the preaching thereof is powerfull by the worke of the Spirit, to confer the Spirit of adoption, whereby beleevers know that there is life and salvation laid up for them in heaven.

Vse. 2.

Who they be that rightly heare the preaching of the Gospel.

Again, hence learne we who they be that rightly heare the preaching of the Gospel; namely, they who are brought by hearing of it, to a true sight of their owne salvation, that life and glory is laid up for them in heaven: the Gospel is powerfull in it selfe to bring men to the knowledge of salvation, it is the arme of the Lord to that purpose, and if it be not thus powerfull in thee, to worke in thee upon good ground, faith and repentance, and a measure of true knowledge and assurance of thine owne salvation, thou hast not profited by hearing of it as thou oughtest: and then marke what the Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 4. 3. *If the Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost*. If thou be not able to see that light that shineth in the Gospel, touching remission of finnes, and salvation, it is a signe of perdition. Again, consider that the devils understand both the Law and the Gospel, and give assent to the Gospel to be true, they goe so farre: if thou then be not brought to some measure of assurance of salvation, thou hast not yet gone beyond the devils, who are already in hell. Let then these things worke upon thee thus farre, to draw thee to examine how thou hast profited by the preaching of the Gospel.

Dott. 7.

The Apostle here calls the Gospel the (*word of truth*) that is, absolute saving

ving truth: hence it followes, that the opinion of such is false, who hold that every man living an outward civill life, may be saved in any religion: the Jew in his Iudaisme, the Turke in his Turcisme, and the Heathen in his Paganisme. For reason teacheth that truth is simple and one, error is manifold; and there is one way to doe well, and many wayes to doe evill. Now every Art and Science hath his truth, but saving truth, is the truth of the Gospell, and there is but one Gospell: one in number, no more; and therefore but one way of salvation, that is by true faith in Christ.

Their opinion is false, who hold, that every man living an outward civill life may be saved in any religion.

Uers. 6. Which is come unto you, even as it is unto all the world, and is fruitfull, as it is also among you, from the day that ye heard and truly knew the grace of God.

In this verse, the Apostle proceeds in commendation of the Gospell, and not contenting himselfe to call it the word of truth, hee goes on further to commend it, and that by two arguments. The first is taken from the wonderfull diffusion and spreading of it, that it was diffused and spread over all the world, that the sound and preaching of it was come to all the parts of the world, in particular, to the Colossians, (*which is come unto you, even as it is unto all the world*). Secondly, hee commends it from the effectuall working and fruitfulness of it, and that both in generall in all the world, and in speciall among the Colossians: for so the sentence must be supplied & made up in the words following: is it the Apostle had said, Is fruitfull in all the world, as it is also among you: And this argument of the fruitfull working of the Gospell in speciall among the Colossians is further amplified by the circumstance of time, that it was fruitfull among them, from the very day they heard & knew the Gospell which is delivered under the name of the grace of God, the matter of it, and by their manner of hearing and embracing of it, expressed in the word (*truly, or in truth*) from the day that ye heard and truly knew the grace of God. These are the generall things contained in this verse: come we to the first argument of commendation (*come unto you*) that is, published and preached among you as the Apostle, citing the words of the Prophet, saith Rom. 10. 15. How beautifull are the feet or coming of them which bring glad tidings of peace: and his meaning is, How excellent and pleasant is the preaching of the Gospell, as appears in the next verse, but they have not all obeyed the Gospell: (*unto all the world*) that is, to all the parts of the world, Asia, Africa, Europe, and America, and to the chiefe nations and kingdomes of those parts, and from them, if not the preaching, yet the same and sound of the Gospell came to the bordering nations: so that in the time of the Apostle, there were very few, or almost none, unto whom either the preaching of the Gospell, or the same of Christ had not come. Hence is the preaching of the Gospell compared by the Apostle to the sound or voyce of the heavens, that as the heavens by beauty, motion, influence shew, and (as it were) peake and sound forth the glory of God to all nations, so (saith the Apostle) applying that of the Psalmist (by the way of similitude) to the preaching of the Gospell, *no doubt their sound went out through all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world*, Rom. 10. 18.

Some may say we reade of certaine Nations newly converted to the faith, as this land of ours, long after the time of the Apostles? It is true, but that is to be understood of the publike profession of the Gospell countenanced by authority, the Gospell sounded forth in the dayes of the Apostles to all the world, but it was not received by publike authority till the time of the Emperours, Constantine and Theodosius.

Now to the doctrine.

First, we are to mark the phrase used by the Apostle, he saith not, the Gospell which

Objection.
Answ.

Doct. 1.

The Lord in
mercy offers
his Gospel un-
to men, and
brings it home
unto them.

Vsa.
The Lord re-
quires that we
receive the
Gospel offer-
red unto us.

which is preached, but ~~came~~ *unto you*: whence we may take up this conclusion, that the Lord in mercy sends unto us his word of grace, the promise of remission of finnes and life by Christ, he doth of his owne good pleasure send and offer unto us his Gospel, the meanes of grace and salvation, by which men are brought to the knowledge of salvation; it is brought home unto us, wee send not for it: no surely, if it were not brought, we should never seeke for it; and the reason is plaine, we have no understanding of the excellent comfort of it, much lesse any desire after it in nature; it is above the reach of nature, created even of nature pure in the state of the first creation; much more is it above the reach of nature, in the state of sinne and corruption: it pleaseth the Lord therefore in mercy to send unto us his Gospel, to offer the meanes of grace and salvation. Wee read, Prov. 9. 3. *Wisdom sends forth her maids freely to invite the simple &c.* to eat of her meate, and drinke of her wine: and the Lord saith, Ier. 7. 25. *He sent all his servants the Prophets, rising up early every day and sending them.* And the Sonne of God himselfe Christ Iesus, saith, Revel. 3. 20. *Hee doth stand at our doore and knocke.*

Now the use of this poynt is this: is it so that the Lord doth send unto us his Gospel? doth hee offer unto us the meanes of grace and salvation? what then doth the Lord require of us? surely that we receive his Gospel, for to that end it is offered, that we should beleene and embrace it, and submit our selves to the power of it: which in the right use is powerfull to worke in us true faith, and true repentance. Now then consider this poynt: it hath pleased the Lord in mercy to vouchsafe unto us the Gospel of salvation countenanced by publike authority, for the space of fiftie yeares together, his name be blessed for it, at the first entrance and preaching of the Gospel, when the preaching of it was rare and scarce, then it was most welcome to many, they greatly reioyced in it, and tooke great delight in the sweete comfort of it: but afterward, when the preaching of it was more plentifull, and it was brought home unto us, then men began to wax weary of it, as the Israelites did of *Manna*, and with that they had never bene troubled with so much preaching: a marvellous thing that wee should grow weare of the goodnesse of God offering mercy unto us: yet so it is, the speech is generall in every mens mouth, that hath any feeling of grace, that our wonted love and zeale to the Gospel, is almost utterly extinct and cleane gone, the three capitall and maine finnes of the world Saint Iohn speaks of, 1 Ioh. 2. 16. *The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life:* sensuality and wanton pleasures, covetousnesse and ambition have so taken up the hearts and lives of most men, that there is nothing to bee found in many of us, but a meere neglect or contempt of the Gospel. But let us take heed, if the Gospel (the meanes of grace comming and being offered unto us, serve onely for conviction, and not for conversion, to convince and not convert us, it will convince us of such a sinne as stands in the sight of God naked, and void of all excuse. *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they should not have had sin, but now have they no cloake for their sinne,* saith Christ, Ioh. 15. 22. And consider further these two things. First, the stability of our estate stands in our obedience to the Gospel: for when we entertaine and obey the Gospel, our state is founded in the kingdome of God: where the Gospel is embraced, there is Gods kingdome, as the Prophet saith, Isa. 52. 7. *I by God raigneth, and his kingdome is most stable and firme, nothing is able to overturne it.* If then our state bee founded in Gods kingdome, we may be assured of the countenance of it, and of whatsoever may serve for our good; would we then have our estate never to change, but to the better? no doubt every man desires it: then learne wee to submit our selves to the Gospel of the kingdome of God. Againe, consider we, though the Lord still continue his comming unto us by his Gospel, and still offer and reach out unto us the meanes of grace and salvation, yet wee know not how long hee will

will so doe, he may (we know not how soone) either take the Gospel from us or us from the Gospel: and if we refuse to receive his grace offered by the coming of his Gospel, he will force his judgments upon us, by the coming of himselfe, by his owne immediate hand, as he hath already begun. As he is kinde to offer grace, so he is iust to revenge the wilful contempt of his offer & he will proportion out the punishment due to the refusall of his mercy: he will make it fiteable and agreeable to the sinne, that as we reiect and lightly regard his mercy offered: so in time of trouble he will not regard our misery, but hee will laugh at our destruction, and mocke when our feare commeth, Prov. 1.26. A sentence full of terrour. If the Lord who in trouble should comfort us, when all other comforts faile, and forsake us: if he will then deride and mocke us (that is by the course of his providence, leave us in misery, and make us a mocking stocke to the world) it must needs be a state almost as hard to be borne as hell it selfe. Let this be thought upon, and let it stirre us up in this our time and day of salvation, to accept the meanes of grace and salvation, and to submit our selves in faith and obedience to the word of the Gospel.

It followeth (even as it is unto all the world.) Hence we may conclude that the Gospel (the meanes of salvation) is universall, it is indifferently offered unto all sort of men, without respect or distinction of person, or difference of people, to Jewes and Gentiles, as the Apostle saith, Rom. 1.16. *It is the power of God to salvation to every one that beleeveth. To the Jew first, and also to the Grecian.* First the Jewes, in respect of order, because Christ was the minister of circumcision, Rom. 1.14.8. And when he first sent forth his Apostles, he forbade them to go into the way of the Gentiles, Math. 10.5. but in his last commission given at his pension, he bid them *Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature,* Mark. 16.15.

Now the preaching of the Gospel, and meanes of salvation being thus universall how is it (will some say) that grace is not received of many? The Papists answer, because they will not, say they: it lieth in a man to give consent to the calling of the Gospel, by his free will helped by grace: but this is meerly false this alibes a power to the will of a naturall man, which is in bondage under sinned Satan, and must not only be helped, as if it had power in it selfe with some lpe to receive grace, but must be delivered from bondage, and changed before can move it selfe to anything that is good, as our Saviour saith. *No man can come unto me, except the father which hath sent me, draw him.* Ioh. 6.44. Draw him, *Augustine*, not leade him, that we might not think his will doth goe before for who is drawne if he were willing before? So then the true answer to the question is, that though grace be universally offered by the Gospel, yet not received of many, because with the outward meanes, there is not in all inward concurrence and worke of Gods spirit: for as our Saviour saith, Ioh. 4.5. *Every man that hath heard, and hath learned of the father, cometh unto me.* They that are not inwardly taught of the father, are ignorant and comor, and having in themselves the cause of their ignorance, are left without use.

This (for the use of it) may minister great cause of thanksgiving to God, to any of us as the Lord hath vouchsafed inwardly to teach, and to open our eyes as he did the heart of *Lydia* to believe and obey the Gospel, Act. 16.14. why? have not we great cause to magnifie the name of the Lord, who in cye hath brought us to the obedience of faith: and in his secret (yet iust) iudgment hath left others as good as wee by nature, in hardnesse and sinne? We see others left in their naturall state and corruption we may behold in what we had deserved, and how much we are bound to the Lord, who in iust iudgment hath passed over others, and in his mercy hath delivered us from our naturall bondage, and so be moved to acknowledge his mercy with

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Doct. 5.

The Gospel and meanes of salvation, is indifferently offered to all sorts of men.

Question.

Answer.

Use.

They have great cause to blesse the Lord, who are inwardly taught of him.

thankfulnesse: and if any will stand to reason the case why the Lord doth not with the outward meanes, giue inward grace to all; the Apostle hath given the answer. O man who art thou that standest to dispute against God? *Rom. 9.20.* He will have mercy on whom hee will. It is his meere mercy that any man is brought to beleeve, and let that suffice thee. So much of the first argument of commendation of the Gospell in these words (*which is come, &c.*)

Now to the second argument (*is fruitfull in all the world:*) for these words must be resumed and repeated, to make a perfect sentence. The Gospell is here said to be fruitfull both generally in all the world, and in special among the Colossians in two respects. First, in respect of the number of such as were converted daily by the preaching of it, in respect of the beleevers, who by the preaching of it were daily increased, as wee read: there were added to the Church by the Sermon of *Peter* about three thousand soules: *Act. 2.41.* and verse 47. It is said the Lord added to the Church from day to day, such as should bee saved. Secondly, in respect of the proceeding of those beleevers, and of them that were converted in faith, in sanctitie and in other graces. The originall text in some examples hath two words (*καὶ πολλαὶ ψυχαὶ, καὶ ἀγαπῶντες*) which plainly bew that word (*fruitfull*) serving to expresse them both, hath his extension, & signifie both increate of number, increase of faith, and holy fruits, that the Gospell was fruitfull in converting many, and powerfull in them that were converted, both generally in all parts of the world, and in speciall among the Colossians, that is the meaning of the words.

Doct 3.

Nothing is able to withstand the power and force of the Gospell, where the Lord is pleased to worke by it.

Come we to such things as may be hence observed. First, from the fruitfulness of the Gospell, the powerful working of it, generally in all the world, that the preaching of it in the dayes of the Apostles, was universally fruitfull in all places of the world, in all sorts of men in their conversion, and other fruits: we are taught that where it pleaseth the Lord to worke by the Gospell, nothing is able to withstand the power and force of it, the powerfull working of it in all parts of the world, in such variety, if not contrariety of states, both of government and religion, such diversity of natures, wits, and dispositions, for being like Wolves, some Leopards, some Lyons, *Isay 11.6.* especially in the empire of *Rome*, which then flourished, and in other mighty principalities: do plainly prove that it is able to beare downe before it the wisdom, learning, policy, power, and strength of the world: and to cast downe whatsoever it is up in opposition against it. For indeed it was withstood & resisted by all the things and many more, in the dayes of the Apostles, in the primitive time as might be proved: yet had it marvailous successe, and did wonderfully increase for the state of religion, it changed the face of the whole world.

Reason.

The reason is given by the prophet, *Isai. 53.1.* It is the arme of the Lord: and by the Apostle; It is the power of God, *1 Cor. 1.18.* and the arme of the Lord hath ever preheminance, and ever prevaieth, and nothing is able to withstand the power of it.

Vse.

We are to examine the particular working of the Gospell in our selves.

Hence the Gospell hath beene, and is so powerfull: it having in it power passing the power of man, yea passing the power and strength of hell must needs be effectually, and nothing able to withstand it. And is this true in the generall working of the Gospell? Then learne we by this to examine the particular working of it, proportionably in our selves, and know that then thou dost indeed embrace the Gospell: and then is it powerfull in thee, when nothing in thee by nature is able to withstand the power of it. When thou dost beare over-ruling thine owne reason, and bearing downe the rebellion of will and affections, and what sinne soever is most pleasing unto thee. Such persons deceive themselves, who thinke they embrace the Gospell, and yet fee not power to beare downe (I will not say) their secret corruptions (which may lurke in their hearts and be unknowne) but their knowne finnes, as in

in their owne fight stand up in opposition against the Gospel: for let this bee thought upon but in reason, can we thinke that the Lords arme is powerfull, where the devils arme armed, holds possession? Can we imagine that the Lord hath wrought by his Gospel, where pride, covetousnes, drunkenesse, malice, or any other shamelesse sinne doth stand up and outface it, and is seene above, any power of it? Hath the Gospel in the primitive times of the Church, nay in the memory of many amongst us, hath it bene powerfull to make men to forsake house, land, wife and children, yea to lose and forgoe their lives, by fire and fagor, and most exquisite torments? and is it not now able to make thee to denie the lusts of thine owne wicked heart? can it not make thee forsake so much as a cup of beere or wine, not needfull? is it not able to make thee leave thy vaine and carnall pleasure? is the Lords arme weakened? is the power of the Gospel abated? No, no, deceive not thy selfe, the Gospel is as mighty as ever it was, through God to cast downe the strongest holds of sinne and Satan, as the Apostle saith, 3 Cor. 10. 4. Certainly, if the Lord have wrought upon thee by the Gospel, for thy conversion and salvation, and not for thy hardning and deeper condemnation, by thy abusing of it, he hath thereby quelled and overmattered the corruption of thy heart, throwne downe thy strongest and most rebelling sinne, even that sin that was most powerfull and pleasing unto thee: let this be thought on and remembered.

As it is also among you. We are here to marke that the Apostle descends from the generall working of the Gospel, to the particular: he saith, *it was fruitfull in all the world*, and there stayes not, but adds further *(as it is also among you)* no doubt both to command and to comfort the Colossians for their embracing of the Gospel.

Whence wee may note how wee may with profit and comfort, thinke and speak of the fruitfull working of the Gospel: namely, when we know and can truly say, it is powerfull not only in general in the Church and land wherein we live, but among us: then may any man speake of the working of the Gospel with comfort, when he can with the Apostle goe from the generall to the particular, and can truly say it is fruitfull in himselfe. Many men are able to make long discourses in commendation of the power of the Gospel, and by unanswerable arguments to prove the Apostles words true in General termes, nay, with instance and example of others sanctified by it, but can say little or nothing of the power of it, in their owne persons.

Now, what profit comes by it to know that the Gospel is the power of God to the salvation of many others, if it were of the whole world, and not of thy selfe? what comfort is it to know, that many are brought by the Gospel to the way of life, and thy selfe left in the way that leadeth downe to hell? nay rather what comfort comes by such knowledge? To have the eye of the mind blinded, and not bee able to see and conceive in the understanding the power of the Gospel, is an heavy indgement: but to see the power of it in the abstract, in it selfe, in generall and not in our selves, that is the very devils care, and it ought to be considered and thought upon. Come we to the words following, wherein the speciall working of the Gospel among the Colossians is amplified: that it was fruitfull from the day that they heard, and truly or in truth knew the grace of God. The Gospel is here called the Grace of God, because it teacheth that remission of finnes and life everlasting, are obtained onely by the meere grace and mercy of God in Christ. The point of instruction hence offered is this

In that it is said, that the Gospel was fruitfull among the Colossians upon their hearing and true knowlidge, not of the Gospel, but of the grace of God propounded unto them in the Gospel: wee are taught, that then onely is this Gospel powerfull to worke upon us, to make us bring forth many good fruits,

Doct. 4.

How we may with profit and comfort, thinke and speake of the fruitfull working of the Gospel.

Dott. 5.

The Gospel is powerfull to make us bring forth good fruit, when we have a feeling knowledge of the comfort of it.

Object.

Answ.

Vjs

We must labour to have a feeling knowledge of the grace of God propounded in the Gospel.

fruits, when we truly know and have even a feeling knowledge of the sweetness and comfort of it: when we truly know, and in our hearts feelingly apprehend the grace of God revealed in the Gospel, then is the Gospel fruitfull, then doth it worke upon us to our sanctification: this order and manner of proceeding from a feeling of sweetness, to fruitfulness, we finde laid before us by the Prophet David, Psal. 119. 10. 11 he there saith, that the iudgements of the Lord were sweeter than the hony and the hony combe: and then hee adds, that by them he was made circumspect. Wee reade of the woman in the Gospel, Luke 7. 47, that shee loved much. Why? many finnes were forgiven her: when she felt much comfort in Gods grace for the pardon of many finnes, then shee brought forth many good fruiiss. And there is great reason for this, that the true knowledge of the grace of God in the Gospel, should make us fruitfull in every good word and worke. For when we feelingly know the grace of God revealed in the Gospel, then wee know we are within the compasse of Gods speciall love: we are assured of his comfortable presence and protection: of our portion in his promise of life and salvation; of right & title to all the comforts and blessings belonging to the Saints of God. How then can it bee, but that the feeling knowledge of grace, the ground of such excellent comfort, should make us fruitfull in all good things? Why, but will some say (it is objected of the Papists) we see the doctrine of Gods free grace for remission of finnes, to be a doctrine dispossessing mens hearts of all true love to God, and charitable affection towards men? It is true indeed, it was so in the dayes of the Apostle, some turned grace into wantonnesse, and it is so still: so great is the corruption of mans degenerate nature, that many turne that pretious doctrine of Gods grace, into a pernicious indulgence and licence to heape sinne upon sinne. But this is but an accidental event, not the proper effect of the doctrine of grace: and shall an accidentall event hinder the course and spreading of such a cause, as properly brings forth true love, both to God and men? God forbid: Would wee then have the Gospel preached powerfull to make us bring forth many good fruits? then labour we, as we heare it, so to have a feeling knowledge of the grace of God propounded in the Gospel, and so have our hearing mixed with faith, as the holy Ghost speakes, Heb. 4. 2. For surely we shall but heare it as a pleasant song, as the Lord saith, Ezech. 33. 32. Nay, we shall but cavil at it, till wee have a feeling knowledge of the comfort of it. The woman of Samaria, Ioh. 4. did but prattle with Christ, till he told her of her sinne, and brought her to a true sight of her sinne: then she humbled herselfe, and confessed her sinne. And after that, when she knew him to be a Prophet, and did acknowledge him to be the Messiah, then she ranne to fetch others unto him, and said, vers. 29. Come and see a man which hath told me all things that ever I did: is not he that Christ? So we shall but prattle of the Gospel, and make it but table talke, till we be humbled in our selves, and have a true knowledge & an inward feeling of the comfort of it. Let us then labour to have our hearts possessed with a feeling apprehension of the grace revealed in the Gospel, and that will set our heads a work as it did Davids, Psal. 116. 12. to devise (if it be possible) some retribution: and wee shall finde, that as many of us as have a peculiar right and title to Gods grace, sealed up in our hearts by the spirit of Christ: it will make us indeavour to be answerable to so strict a bond, in all cheerefull obedience and love, both to God and men.

Uers. 7. As ye also learned of Epaphras our deare fellow-servants which is for you, a faithfull Minister of Christ.

THe Apostle having set down the means how the Colossians came to know that life and glory was laid up for them in heaven; namely, by hearing of the

the Gospell. In this seventh verse he comes to the person by whom the Gospell was preached, and they brought to that knowledge (namely) by Epaphras (*As ye also learned of Epaphras*) the Apostle further describes him what he was: First, in respect of himselfe and Timothy: that in preaching of the Gospell hee was their fellow labourer, and addes, what affection they had towards him, that he was deare unto them, or that they loved him dearly: then by his office and calling that he was a Minister of Christ: and he sets downe, how he demeaned himselfe in his calling: that he was faithfull, and that for the good of the Colossians (*which is for you a faithfull minister of Christ*): and further proves it, verf. 8. that he was faithfull for their good, in that hee gave testimony of their love, (who hath also declared unto us your love) which is amplified by the quality of it in the last words (which ye have by the spirit): these be the generall things contained in these two verses. Come wee to the words as they are laid downe by the Apostle (*As ye also learned, &c.* Wee are here to marke, that the Apostle is not content to say, that the Colossians came to the knowledge of salvation by the Gospell, but that they also learned it of Epaphras, not that Epaphras was a meanes of himselfe, or by any other doctrine, but that he was the preacher and dispenser of the Gospell, and by his preaching of the Gospell brought them to that knowledge: whence ariseth this instruction:

That the knowledge of salvation is ordinarily wrought in men, by the Gospell, not by the letters, and syllables, or bare sentences written in the bookes of the old or new Testament: but by the Gospell taught and applyed unto them by the ministry of man called to teach: for the Gospell is indeed the power of God to salvation; yet not to every one generally, but to every one that beleeueth that is the limitation, and how. Is faith wrought by the bare letter or sentence of the Gospell? no, but by the Gospell unfolded and applyed. Marke the gradation, Rom. 10. 14. *How shall they beleeve in him, of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher?* For the working of faith, the Gospell must be heard, and not only heard by a bare repetition of the sentence, but heard preached, that is to say, unfolded and applyed: *The Scripture (saith the Apostle) is profitable to teach, to improve, to correct, and to instruct in righteousness.* 2 Tim. 3. 16. And marke what followeth upon this in the next Chapter, first and second verses, *I charge thee therefore before God, and before the Lord Iesus Christ, which shall iudge the quicke and the dead at his appearing, and in his kingdome. 2. Preach the word: be instant in season and out of season: improve, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.* The Scripture being profitable in it selfe, it must bee preached and applyed by men called; to the severall uses of it. The sentence of the Gospell is generall, and the promises of salvation are indefinitely propounded, *whosoever beleeueth, he shall be saved*: and they are above the reach of naturall understanding, such as reason cannot comprehend: and generals of that nature must needes bee unprofitable without explication and application of them: the Lord therefore hath ordained that men called to teach the Gospell, should in his name expound and apply the same to the persons of their hearers particularly, that so they might bee brought to the knowledge of salvation.

It will bee said; the Prophet saith, in the time of the Gospell, men should teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know mee from the least of them, unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord, Jerem. chapter 31. verse 34. Now then is it that the Gospell must bee taught by the ministry of man: how is that a true prophetic?

The meaning of the Prophet is, that Gods elect in the time of the new Testament should not only bee taught by the outward ministry of the word, but inwardly by his spirit, as appears in the verse before. And the Prophet speaks

Dott. 1.

The knowledge of salvation, is ordinarily wrought in men by the Gospell preached by men called to that office.

Objection.

Ans.

Rply.

in regard of the plentiful measure of knowledge under the Gospell, according to that, *Isay 11.9.* that the earth should bee full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters that cover the sea. Some may reply and say, this answer is not sufficient, is the Prophet so to bee understood, that the Elect of God should bee taught inwardly by his spirit? Then Saint *Iohn* hath shewed it needlesse to bee taught by man, the anoynting (that is to say) the spirit of Christ, which ye have received of him, dwelleth in you: and ye need not that any man teach you: but the same anoynting teacheth you of all things, and it is true, and is not lying. and as it is taught you, *ye shall abide in him, 1 Ioh. 2. 27.*

Answ.

Answ, The meaning of Saint *Iohn* is, that the Elect having received the Spirit need not that any man should teach them to discerne truth taught from error and deceit, they are inwardly taught of the spirit, they have their mindes enlightened their iudgements cleared, and therefore he saith, *vers. 26. These things have I written unto you, concerning them that deceive you.* And then he subioynes in the seventeenth verse, *but the anoynting, &c.* So then notwithstanding these exceptions, this remains a truth, that men are brought to the knowledge of salvation, not by the bare sentence of the Gospell delivered in the writings of the Apostles, but by it explained and applyed by men called to that office.

Vg.

We are not to
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try and teach-
ing of the Gos-
pell, by men
called to that
function.

Hath the Lord sanctified the ministry of man called to teach and apply the Gospell to such an excellency, as by it to bring us to a particular knowledge of our owne salvation? then let this serve to rule and order our conceit and estimation of the ministry and teaching of the Gospell by men called to that duty and function, let us not thinke it either needlesse or base. Who well in his wit, and led by the divine light of reason, will lightly regard, that, which being rightly used, will bring him to the knowledge of his owne everlasting good? such is the ministry and teaching of the Gospell, by men called to that function: yea, the teaching of the word, by men called to that office, is ordained of the Lord to make it profitable, what part of the word soever it be, whether the Law or the Gospell, let us then take heed wee contemne not the teaching of the word by men in any part of it; whether shewing sinne by the law and denouncing iudgements; or preaching mercy, and applying the promises of the Gospell: let us not lightly esteeme it, because it is brought by a weake and mortall man, the Lords ordinance is powerfull in weaknesse, as in the creation, hee brought light out of darknesse, and redemption and life out of death: so in our conversion, he workes upon us by the ministry of weake men: and herein he doth not only provide for our weaknesse, who are not able to endure the Majesty of his owne immediate voyce, or the voice of an Angell, but to try our obedience, whether we will looke only at his instrument, or at his ordinance, whether wee will have our eye on the earthen vessell, or on the excellent treasure brought in that vessell: and therefore to lay this a little neerer unto our hearts many there bee that will bee content to looke at the Lords ordinance of the word, brought by the ministry of men: when the word of grace and mercy is preached, they will then looke on that, as the word of God, and confesse and acknowledge it so to be, and upon a false ground hale it to themselves: but when the law is laid open, and the iudgements of God denounced, then they heare and regard that but as the word of man and not of God: then they blasse themselves, and promise peace to themselves, and say in their hearts, no such things shall happen unto them, it is but the word of their Preacher. I appeale to mens owne hearts, whether these thoughts doe not many times rise in them or no, and if we finde they doe, then marke what will follow, the Lord will punish us, even by our owne thoughts: that as wee thinke his iudgements denounced by the ministry of man, to be but the words of men, and of our Preachers, so he will make his word of grace offered by the ministry of man, to be unto us but as the word of man, we shall rot in our finnes, and lie still unconverted, it shall be

unpro-

unprofitable unto us, for the Lord is iust, and he will punish sinne in the same kind: and as we thinke of his word of threatning, so shall his word of mercy bee unto us. Consider the example of *Hierod*, he heard many things *Iohn* taught him gladly: he heard them (no doubt) as the word of God by the ministry of *Iohn*: but when *Iohn* came to touch his sinne, and to tell him the danger of living in that sinne, he would none of that, he then thought it was but *Iohns* word, and so would bee avenged of him: and so indeed all that hee heard of *Iohn*, was (by the iust judgement of God) but as mans word unto him, he lived and dyed in his sinnes: so will it come to passe with us, if so bee wee thinke the judgements of God denounced against us for our sinnes in the ministry of the word, are but the words of men. Learne wee therefore, in the ministry of the word by man called to that office, to looke not at the Instrument, but at the ordinance of God, and let us receive the word, as the word of God: whether threatning judgements, or promising mercy. Now to the description of *Ephraim*. First, the Apostle saith, he was in respect of him and *Timothy* their deare fellow servant: which words are thus to bee conceived, that they did acknowledge him a fellow-labourer with them in the preaching of the Gospell, and consequently one dearely beloved of them.

Now in that the Apostle saith *Epaphras* was his fellow-servant, and so deare to him, and to *Dionitus*: hence we may conclude, that such as are lawfully knit together in any common bond, they are by the example of the Apostle tenderly to be affected one towards another: children of the same parents, servants of one master, men of one society, neighbours one to another: It is usuall in the Scriptures to urge and presse love by this kind of reasoning, that men that are conioyned by some common bond, they ought to love one another. *Abraham* used this argument, *Genes. 12. 8.* *Moses* used no other to accord the two Hebrewes, *Act. 7. 26.* Sirs ye are brethren, why doe ye wrong one to another. We may observe, that when *Josephs* brethren forgot him to be their brother, or at least did not so consider him, they said, *come let us kill him*, *Gen. 37. 10.* But after when they considered him as their brother, then they thinke of a more mild and gentle course, *v. 27.* *Come and let us sell him to the Ismaelites, and let not our hands be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh: and his brethren obeyed.* As the Scripture thus urgeth love, so nature it selfe teacheth it, having imprinted in such as she hath conioyned, a bending and an inclination one towards another. And it was ever held odious among the Heathen, and a growing out of kind, for men in nature neerely conioyned, to be farre disioyned in affection. And is the bond of outward brotherhood, service, society and neighbourhood, and such like, a perswasion, and a powerfull argument urging love? then doubtlesse much more is the inward bond of the spirit, because by the spirit men are more neerely conioyned, then they are or can be by nature. By the spirit they are made members of one mysticall body, members one of another, *Rom. 12. 5.*

Let this then be thought on by all that professe the fellowship and communion of the spirit. Let us thinke upon it, that we have one God to our father, one Church to our mother, Christ our elder brother, and that we are born of one immortall seed, that wee are knit together in one faith, one religion, one hope of salvation, and therefore ought to love one another. Come we to the other part of the description of *Ephraim*, that he was for the *Colossians* a faithfull minister of Christ.

Whence note we first, that where a minister is faithfull in the discharge of his duty, it is for the good of the people, so saith the Apostle, (*for you*) that is, for your good, and this might be proved by all the titles that are given to ministers in the Scripture, they are called light, which is comfortable to the beholders, salt, for seasoning, labourers in the Lords husbandry, builders of his Temple, leaders, guides, &c. all which shew their labour and paines in the ministry, tend

Mark. 6. 20.

DoE.2.

Such as are lawfully knit together in any common bond, they are to be tenderly affected one to another.

Therefore such
as profess fel-
lowship and
communion of
the Spirit, are
tenderly to
love one ano-
ther.

Doc. 3.

A Minister being faithfull in discharging of his duty, it is for the good of the people.

Vse.
The people
must answer
the paines of
the Minister
in profiting
themselves.

tend to the good of Gods people. But the experience of such as have profited, by the paines of faithfull ministers may sufficiently confirme the truth of this poynt.

Now then is it so, that a faithfull minister is for the good of the people; then let us look where the minister is in any measure faithfull, that we be answerable in profiting our selves and receiving good, for as the holy ghost saith, that earth which drinketh in the raine, and beareth thornes and briars is reprov'd, and is neere unto cursing, whose end is to be burned, Heb 6. 8. Consider yet further these two things: First, hardnesse and want of profiting in the people, is a great griefe and discouragement, and even a pull backe to a faithfull minister. Witness *Jeremie*, who resolved upon this, not to speake any more in the name of the Lord, Ierem. 20. 9. Again if a Minister be faithfull, and we profit not, it argues, we are sunke deepe in rebellion; even drunken in sin, yea sunke deepe into the sinne of drunkennesse for of all others, drunkards are the hardest to be drawne to repentance, for as drunkennesse for the time of it, makes a man like a bruite beast, unfit for any common and naturall duty: so it is the naturall effect of that sinne, to deprive a man (when hee is sober) of all understanding and capacity of instruction. Therefore the Lord when hee was to call by his Prophet for a generall reformation, he spake in particular to drunkards: *A wake ye drunkards, and weepe and howle, all ye drinkers of wine* Joel 1. 5. If then wee would not hinder the paines of such as labour in the ministry amongst us, and shew our selves sunke deepe in rebellion, let us labour to profit and to receive good by them that labour for our good, and endeavour to profit us. And remember the words of the holy Ghost, Heb. 13. 17. *Obey them that have the oversight of you, and submit your selves: for they watch for your soules, as they that must give account, that they may give it with ioy and not with griefe, for that is unprofitable for you.* Now in the next place wee are to marke, that the Apostle in commending *Ephraim* a minister of Christ, doth not magnifie and extoll him, for his wit, his learning, his eloquence, his gravity: but he commends him for his faithfulness, that he was faithfull, that is to say, hee did use his talent and gift bestowed upon him for the best advantage, both of gaining glory to Christ his Lord, and good to his people: for that is to be faithfull as appears in the parable of the talents, Matthew 25.

Doct. 4.
The chiefe ornament of a Minister is, to be faithfull in the execution of his office, and the like is true of other callings.

Hence it followes, that the chiefe ornament and that which most commends a minister of Christ, in respect of the execution of his office, is to be faithfull and to answer that trust that is reposed in him. As for the rest (that is to say) as for other things, or howsoever he be carefull for other things, it is not so much materiall, but it is especially required of him that he be found faithfull, 1 Cor 4. 2. And indeed it is required in every duty, that he be faithfull in teaching, in exhorting, in comforting, in reprehending: it must be found in every ministeriall action: without it nothing is pleasing to God, or profitable to men. And this not only concernes the minister of the word, and is required of him, and to be urged upon him, but it may be reached out further, and that by iust warrant of the word, The Apostle saith, such as are ordained to rule and governe others, they are Gods ministers, Rom. 13. 4. they are appointed of the Lord, for the good of those that be under them, they have a talent in trust given unto them. Now then that which most commends the minister of the word, is it not also praise worthy, and most commendable in other Gods ministers, such as are deputed of the Lord to have the rule and government of others? Yes doubtlesse, diligence and faithfulness in the charge committed, either in Church or Common-wealth, as it is most requisite and necessary, so it is most excellent and commendable: it is as a crowne that must be set on the head of all good duties. Wee reade in many places, of the vigilancy, care and diligence of *Moses*, that neither the difficulty and insolent labours of his calling, the contumacy, untowardnesse, and ingratitude

tude of the people, the emulation and grudging of equals, did any whit hinder him from going on with courage and constancy in his duty: the Lord therefore himselfe with his owne mouth, gives him this commendation, Numb. 12. 7. That he was faithfull in all his house: and that must needs bee most commendable which the Lord commends in any man. Wee finde this commendation given to Christ himselfe, Heb. 3. 2. and that with greater glory unto him then unto *Moses*, because hee was a more excellent person. If wee doe but consider how the devill labours, to make men (put in trust by the Lord with gifts, and places of rule and government) unfaithfull; and not to answer the trust reposed in them: that so their condemnation may be the deeper, and that he may hinder the profit of others, who might be bettered by them: the truth of this will easily appeare: that in any place of rule where it is most commendable to be faithfull, he by suggestion teacheth men, as we see by experience to say (when they are urged to doe their duty) what can I do? I will not trouble my selfe; or make my selfe busie, it belongs not to my office, it is good sleeping in a whole skinne, I shall be blamed, I shall be reproached, I shall labour in vaine, and peradventure make the matter worse, another may doe it better than I; with a thousand such like suggestions, doth the devill furnish men to make them sluggish and unfaithfull, all which plainly evince, that faithfulness in any place of trust, is an excellent thing.

And let this be thought on, by all that are called to any rule or government of others, either publikely, or in a private family: parents, masters, household governours, &c. seeing it is so excellent a thing to be faithfull, let it serve to stir them up to answer that trust the Lord, hath reposed in them, to use the place given them, to bring such as are under them to feare the Lord, for that is in generall the charge that lies on governours, and laid upon them by the Lord in the fourth commandment: that they in their owne persons sanctifie the Sabbath, and learn to feare the Lord, and cause others under them to doe likewise. For want of faithfull discharge of duty, in such as have the government of others it comes to passe that many foule disorders spoken against, are still unreformed: to insist in one particular. Though the Minister cry out again drunkenness, and spend himselfe in dissuading from it, and good lawes be made for the reformation of it, yet still that sinne is as rife and common, nay more common then ever it was: where is the fault? is it not in such as beare office, and should faithfully execute their office, according to law in that case provided. Yes without question: *Moses* and *Aaron* must ioyn hands together. The Minister must be seconded and assisted by the publike officer, (or else many there bee that will not be reformed) to perswade such as are in any publike office, or have the government of private families, to become faithfull in labouring, to bring those that are committed to their charge, to feare the Lord. Consider first, the diligent faithfulness in the charge committed, is both sweet and pleasing to God, and good for our selves. Hee that is diligent in his businesse, standeth before Kings; but hee that is diligent in the worke of the Lord, (such is every publike charge) shall stand with ioy before the Lord, the King of Kings. Come good and faithfull servant, thou hast beene faithfull in little, I will make thee ruler over much, enter into thy masters ioy, *Math. 25. 21*. To him that is slothfull the contrary shall be said. Againe, let us but thinke with our selves, how diligent the wicked are to doe evill. *Judas* will warch when others are a sleepe, and that for a mischeife. The high Priests, and all that rout assemble together betimes in the dawning against Christ, even before day will the wicked be working ill. They muse on mischief on their beds, *Pro. 4. 16*. And feare not to pull upon themselves that woe denounced by the Prophet, *Isay 5. 11*. They will rise early to call companions to follow after drunkenness; and shall the wicked be thus diligent (if I may so call it) to doe evill, and shall it not move such

Use.

Men are to answer that trust the Lord hath reposed in them in any place and calling:

Psal. 77. 20.

Mark. 15. 1.

such as the Lord hath put in trust, to be vigilant and faithfull in well doing? Surely then their vigilancy and paines shal stand up in iudgement against them, and shall condemne them. Adde to this as a third motive, that which we finde, Gen. 18. 19. Where the Lord saith, he will not hide from *Abraham* that which he was about to doe, and why? For I know him that hee will command his sonnes, and his household after him, that they keepe the way of the Lord, to doe righteousnesse and iudgement. See how the Lord liketh carefullnesse of parents to instruct their children, it is so pleasing unto him, that hee will reveale his secrets unto them that use it, and hide nothing that may be for their comfort. On the contrary from such as are careless of this duty, hee will hide his secrets, his counsels, yea without repentance, all his comforts, and the light of his countenance for ever. Let these things be thought on, and stirre us up to faithfullnesse in place of rule and government.

Uers. 8. *Who hath also declared unto us your love, which ye have by the Spirit.*

Come we to the eight verse, where the Apostle proves, that *Epaphras* was faithfull for the good of the *Colossians*, because he gave testimony of their love. To omit other acceptions, the words are thus to be understood, that *Epaphras* made knowne to *Paul* and *Timothy*, what love the *Colossians* bare unto them (for hee spake of all their love to all the Saints before, vers. 4,) and the words carry this sence; which yee have being farre from us in body, that you doe inwardly affect us in soule and spirit, though you be farre distant from us in body: and that the word (spirit) is sometimes thus taken, appears Cap. 2. of this Epistle, vers. 5, though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit.

Here first we are to marke, that the Apostle commends *Epaphras* for reporting unto him how the *Colossians* loved him and *Timothy*, which may ministrate this instruction: that it is an excellent vertue for such as have intercourse, and passe betwene party and party, to relate and speake of things that may engender, and encrease true mutuall love and Christian affection betwene them: thus did *Epaphras*, he (no doubt) made knowne to the *Colossians*, what an excellent Apostle *Paul* was. Againe, he declared to him, what love the *Colossians* bare unto him, to stirre him up in affection towards them: hence it is that we finde it among the vertues of speciall note, to thinke and speake of things that pertaine to love, *Phil. 4. 8.* Will we see a reason of this? it is soone given, any man may easily conceive it, if he doe but consider as he ought the excellency of true Christian love amongst men, it being that which is driven at in all commandments of the second table: and that which makes all good duties profitable, and good to our brethren, as the Apostle proves at large, *1 Cor. 13.* and love being thus excellent, surely the speaking of such things, as tend to the furtherance and increase of it mutuall amongst men, must needs be a speciall vertue, and a worthy grace of a good Christian.

This being so, that to report such things as may engender, and encrease love, is an excellent vertue. Then the contrary to this, to carry such tales and reports between parties, which are as wood to the fire, *Pro. 26. 10.* to stir up to strife, to set men at oddes and difference, cannot chuse but be a notable vice, and the very character and badge of a lewd person, and a fault too common in the world: some there be who make tale-telling so common a practise, as there is not an honest man or woman, that hath not sometime or other bene wounded by the stroke of the ranging tongue of the tale-bearer: but let such as are guilty of this sin, consider the ugliness of it: let them consider beside this, that it is the property of a vile nature, to seek by tales to make others vile, that it is the very bane & poyson of friendship, & the cut-throat of amity, a degree of murder, so saith the Lord

Vjs
Carrying of
tales betweene
parties, is a no-
table vice.

Lord, that in Ierusalem were men that carryed tales to shed blood, Ezech. 22. 9: Let them (I say) further consider the reach of this sinne: it reacheth not only to the killing of the bodies, but of the soules of many at one blow: we say, it is a shrewd blow that kills three at once. Now the tale-teller (without Gods mercy) kills his owne soule, and peradventure the soules of twenty more, who rashly upon the hearing of a false tale condemne the innocent: the Lord therefore stirred up the spirit of David, to pray that God would roote out all deceitfull lips, Psalme 12. 3. If these things bee thought on, they are sufficient to breed in a heart (not given over to it selfe) a detestation of this sinne; and let us take heed the Devill deceive us not in this case: for hee will force this upon us, under many faire pretences, as that we are sorry that our neighbour hath done so, that we speake not of malice, nor all we could speake, &c.

Let us beware of this subtilty, and learne to avoid this sinne;

From the last words (*which ye have by the spirit.*) The poynt briefly is this: that true beleevers love one another, though they never see the face one of another: which argues true love not rising from any outward thing, either pleasure or profit. the ground of this, is their union with Christ: for they that are one with Christ, cannot but bee one in heart among themselves, how farre distant soever they bee one from another in body. And let us hereby try our love to the Saints of God, if we be affected towards them, of whom wee heare well, and yet never saw them; if we love them as heartily as our owne sonne or brother: then our love is true spirituall love, and a testimony of our adoption. *Wee know that we are translated from death to life, because we love the brethren.* 1 Ioh. 3. 14.

Doct. 2.

True beleevers love one another, although they see not the face one of another.

Vse.

We are hereby to try our loue to the Saints of Gods.

Verf. 9.

Verf. 9. For this cause we also since the day wee heard of it, cease not to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be fulfilled with knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spirituall understanding.

The Apostle having finished the first part of the preface of this Epistle, his congratulation or reioycing for the Colossians. In this ninth verse, hee comes to the second part, his comprecation or prayer for them, which is laid down in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh verses. In this ninth verse, he first sets downe the moving cause, what moved him to pray, namely, the sinne that moved him to give thanks, (*for this cause, &c.*) together with the continuance of his prayer, that from the day, he heard of their faith and love, he continued to pray for them: and then further he makes knowne in what manner he prayed, namely with desire: after that follows the matter of his prayer, that they might be fulfilled with knowledge, which knowledge is limited by the object, namely the will of God: and further amplified by two speciall things, wherein it doth consist, namely, wisdom and understanding, and both these spirituall. These be the parts of this ninth verse. Touching the words, not to say anything of the moving cause, that stirred the Apostle to pray for the Colossians, having spoken of that in the third verse; nor yet of the continuance of his prayer, that he ceased not to pray for them.

The first thing that we may hence observe, is, that prayer is a speciall meanes to helpe us forward, and to make us encrease in knowledge and spirituall understanding. The Apostle thought it not sufficient to write unto the Colossians, and to labour with them by instruction and exhortation to confirme them in the true faith: but he further saith, hee ceased not to be instant with the Lord in prayer for them, that they might be fulfilled with knowledge of his will: whence it followes, that prayer, not only of others, but of us for our selves, is a notable meanes, for the encrease of our spirituall knowledge: this is taught most plainly; *If any man lacke wisdom, or any having a small measure of wisdom,*

The second part of the preface of this Epistle. the Apostles comprecation:

Doct. 1.

Prayer is a speciall meanes for the encrease of our spirituall knowledge.

dome finde an emptinesse, a defect and want of wisdom and knowledge) as no man but shall, if he be able to sift his owne braine) and would have a supply, let him aske of God, which giveth to all men liberally, and reprobeth no man, and it shall be given him. *Iam. 1. 5.* The reasons of this are: first, it is a confessed truth, that the knowledge of Gods will revealed in his word, comes by illumination of the spirit of Christ, in whose power it is to open and shut the booke of God at his pleasure. We are not able of our selves, to understand the plainest things delivered in the word. Now the spirit of grace and illumination is obtained by the prayer of faith: so saith our Saviour, *If ye which are evil can give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Ghost to them that desire him? Luke 11. 13.* Whence it followeth necessarily, that prayer is a speciall meanes for the encrease of knowledge. Againe, true prayer (the prayer of faith) is not onely a meanes to fit, to prepare and to sanctifie our hearts to receive grace; but even the very action of prayer: though it doe not merit, yet doth it increase in some particulars, a further measure of grace and sanctification. For example, true prayer for the pardon of sinne, worketh greater care to avoid sinne: it is not possible that a man should make a plaine and hearty confession of any sinne to God in prayer, and desire him to pardon it, and promise amendment: but that by the very confession, hee should be bettered and further off from that sinne. Hence it is that our Saviour saith, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation, Math. 26. 41.* that he may be strengthened and better able to withstand temptation. So then, prayer being a meanes to fit, and prepare our hearts to receive grace and the very action of prayer encreasing a further measure of grace, in some particulars, it must needs be a notable meanes for the encrease of spirituall knowledge.

Vs
When we come to the hearing of the word we are to prepare our selves by prayer.

For the use of this, let us thinke of it to this speciall purpose: when we are to come to the hearing of the word, to be further informed in the way of God, remember we then to prepare our selves by prayer, to lift up our hearts in earnest and hearty prayer unto God, that the eyes of our mindes may be opened, that we may rightly understand things delivered, and that our wills and affections may be transformed into an holy obedience to the will of God made knowne unto us: for certainly it is a true speech one hath: though God himselfe should appeare in the likenesse of man and speake unto us, yet if hee did not also move and direct us by his inward grace, his preaching would be unprofitable unto us. Wee are therefore by prayer to crave the assistance of his spirit. Many never thinke of this duty: many of us either lie securely basking our selves in our beds, till the instant time of comming to the publike assembly: or else if we rise it is either to follow after worldly affaires, or to tricke and trim up our bodies: and few or none of us have any care to fit and prepare our selves, to sanctifie our soules, before wee come to the hearing of the word but wee come laden with our sinnes, and with our mindes overcharged with divers lusts: and so it comes to passe that the speech of the Apostle is verified upon us, that wee are ever learning, and yet never able to come to the sound knowledge of the truth, *2 Tim. 3. 7.* And how can it otherwise bee, but that as many of us as come without preparation by prayer, should be unfit to attaine sound knowledge? for so comming, we rashly presume we can understand Gods mysteries by the strength of our owne wits, and so are iustly confounded, and overwhelmed with the maiesty and brightnesse of them. Againe we must know, that prayer is to the soule, as exercise to the body: and as men use exercise of the body, especially before meat to stir up naturall heat, to quicken the spirits, and to sharpen the stomacke; so prayer must be used before we come to the feeding of our soules, to stir up spirituall motions in our hearts, & to work in us an holy appetite and desire after the word: an hunger and thirst after the heavenly food of

of our soules: as men for want of bodily exercise, sit sometimes at a table well furnished with good and wholesome meat, and can eat little or nothing: so we shall finde that for want of preparation, by the exercise of prayer: many sit before the Preacher and are not able to taste or feele any true sweetnesse in any thing laid before them: nay, they are heavy and sluggish, and unfit to receive any good. Remember therefore before we come to the hearing of the word, to lift up our soules in prayer to God, and even to stretch out the faculties and powers of our soules, as men in bodily exercise stretch out the ioynts of their bodies: we shall thereby (no doubt) finde and feele a great alteration in our soules, that they are more quicke and ready to receive heavenly nourishment. Come we now to the manner of the Apostles prayer in respect of his inward affection that he prayed with desire.

In that he saith, he did not only pray for the Colossians, but desire that they might be fulfilled with knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spirituall understanding, we are taught that true prayer must be with inward fervency, with an holy sanctified desire of the heart. Prayer must be rather a travell of the heart than the labour of the lippes. Hence it is said to be a powring out of the soule, 1 Sam. 1. 15. and compared to intense, Psalm. 41. 2. To note unto us, that it must be offered up (as it were) by fire, it must proceed from the heate of the heart, that it may be a sweet swelling sacrifice to God. It is to bee marked that our Saviour saith not, whatsoever ye pray for, but, whatsoever yee desire when ye pray, beleeve that ye shall have it, and it shall be done unto you, Mark. 11. 24. And that prayer must be with an inward desire, it appeares even by the Lords manner of dealing with his children, who useth meanes to whet and sharpen their desires, sometimes by deferring to grant their requests. Thus he dealt with *Moses*, Exod. 32. The Lords purpose was to spare the people, yet when *Moses* prayed for them, the Lord said, verf. 10. *Let me alone:* and sometimes by afflicting of them, thus hee dealt with *David*, Psalm. 42. 4. *When I remembered these things, I poured out my very heart, because I had gone with the multitude, and led them into the house of God, with the voyce of singing and praise, at a multitude that keepeth a feast.* And the Lord using thus to deale with his children, doth plainly evince and prove the doctrine delivered.

We see our duty, let us now a little examine our practise: and because it will not bee sufficient to take a view of it in generall, and to shew that men powre out their prayers only of forme and fashion, without any sanctified disposition, or holy desire of their hearts: let us insist in one particular, whereby wee may easily see how men faile in this duty and doe not pray as they ought, with a true inward desire of their hearts. The thing is this, men sometimes pray unto God, that they may abstaine from some knowne sinne, a sinne wounding and wasting their consciences, and they seeme to pray with desire that they may abstain from it, but the event many times shewes the contrary: for they find no fruit of their prayers, it vanisheth, and they lie still in that sinne unreformed. For example: a man given to customary swearing, being told of it, and reprov'd for it, hee will sometimes lift up his voice in prayer and say, I pray God give mee grace to leave it, which is a good speech, and a speech bearing shew of inward desire to leave that sinne: but indeed many times there is no such matter: for he still forgets himselfe, and oathes are still common with him. But will some say, It seemes to mee, and I perswade my selfe when I say, God give mee grace to leave my sinne, that I have a desire in my heart to leave it, will you sit in iudgement upon my conscience? tell mee then, I pray you, how I shall know that my desire of grace, and strength against sinne is no true sanctified desire? I answer, I take not upon mee to sit in iudgement upon thy conscience; let the word iudge that, and from thence I dare bee bold to tell thee, that thy desire is no true desire, when it is onely a bare desire, when it ceaseth and is at an end, so soone as

F

Doct. 2.

True prayer must be with inward fervency and desire of the heart.

Vse.

We are to examine our selves how we pray.

Quest.

Answ.

it is uttered, and thou hast no further care to use other sanctified meanes, to help and strengthen thee against thy sinne: as hearing, reading, and meditating on the threatnings and iudgements of God against that sinne: for thus it was with *Balaam*, Numb. 23. 10. Hee desired to die the death of the righteous, but his desire was no sooner uttered, but it was at an end: hee had no care to live a sanctified life, that leads to a blessed and comfortable death. Such as pray for grace and strength against sinne with a true sanctified desire, they ioine to their desire the holy use of other meanes: and their desire is not fleeing and vanishing, but constant, and they give the Lord no rest till hee grant their desire: yea, they use vehement and urging arguments to the Lord, to move him to grant it: they urge the former favour and mercy of God in helping them against other sinnes: they pray that the Lord will not suffer their enemy Satan to overcome them: they presse the Lord with his promise, *aske and you shall have: seeke and you shall finde*. Thus it is with them that have a true sanctified desire of grace and strength against sinne. And to stirre up our dulnesse in this case, consider we, first, that prayer (without a true desire of the heart) is meere mockery, and cannot escape unpunished: the Lord denounceth a woe against it, Hos. 7. 14. Again, prayer sent out from a true desire of the heart, and offered up in Christ, is pleasing to God; yea, though it be but a desire, true and hearty, when the voyce faileth, yet then it pierceth the clouds. Look on the example of *Hannah* 1 Sam. 1. 13. She spake in her heart, her lips did move onely, but her voyce was not heard, and the Lord heard her: and upon the example of *Hezekiah*, Isa. 38. 14. Like a Crane did he chatter, yet the Lord heard his prayer. And this is both a notable comfort, and also a notable inducement to stirre us up to powre out our prayers, with an inward fervency, with an holy desire of our hearts. Now to the matter of the Apostles prayer, in the words following, (*that they might be fulfilled with knowledge in all wisdom and spirituall understanding*) with the limitation in respect of the object (*the will of God*.) The words carry this sence, *That ye might be fulfilled with knowledge*, that is to say, that ye might encrease in knowledge, and come to that measure, the Lord hath appointed necessary for salvation, (for some of the members of Christ have one measure, some another, according to that, Ephes. 7.) yet every one so much as is necessary to salvation, which the Apostle here prayed for. (*of his will*) that is, the will of God revealed touching things to be beleaved and practised..

Now in that the Apostle lift up his prayer to God for the Colossians, and desired of him, that they having some measure of knowledge, might receive encrease of it: wee may conclude, that not onely the beginning, but a further measure of illumination and understanding of Gods will, is the free gift of God, it is the Lords bounty and largesse, it comes unto us as almes to beggers, freely; it is gotten by earnest entreating and suing for, at the hands of God: yet not for the merit of any entreary. As the beggar gets not his almes for the worthinesse of his craving, but of the meere bounty of the giver: so we get encrease of knowledge from the meere mercy of God, and in greater or lesse measure, according to the good pleasure of the Lord. The Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 12. 11. that the spirit distributeth his gifts as hee will: the distribution of the gifts of Gods Spirit is voluntary, therefore free, and the unequall distribution of the gift of knowledge (in that some have a greater measure of knowledge then others) is a cleere prooffe, that the increase comes from the meere bounty of the Lord; not from respect had of any thing in us. For if the Lord should give a different measure of knowledge, not freely, but upon desert: then in all likelihood they who have a greater measure of faith, should have a greater measure of knowledge but wee may many times observe the contrary, that they have more knowledge who have a lesse measure of Faith: yea sometimes they who have no saving faith, have such a measure of knowledge, as they are able to prophesie, Mat. 7. 22 therefore

credenda & facienda.

Doct. 3.

Both the beginning and further measure of illumination is the free gift of God.

therefore both the beginning and the encrease of our knowledge of the will of God, is the free gift of God.

Let this teach us, if it please the Lord to give us any insight, any little knowledge of his will revealed in his word: nor to bee lift up in conceit of our owne wit, as if then we were able to goe on by our owne strength: if we doe, we shall finde a curse upon our wits, and by them we shall be led into many erroneous opinions. If we observe it, we shall finde that this hath bene the mother of many foule and dangerous errors, when men having some generall illumination, some knowledge of Gods will revealed, they have then thought themselves able to goe on by the strength of their owne wit; they have bene left to themselves and then have runne into many errors: witnesse the best learned among the Papists, who resting on a conceit of their schoole-subtilties and distinctions invented in their owne wits: have runne into most grosse and palpable absurdities, and have stiffely and obstinately stood in defence of them. Wee must therefore learn, in going on in the knowledge of Gods will, not to rest on the strength of our owne wits, but upon the blessing of God upon them: use the benefit of wit and understanding in humility: for wit in it selfe is no cause of wandring out of the way, into by-paths of error and heresie. *Moses, Daniel and David* had excellent wits, but they were humbled and sanctified, and so great helpe unto them: it is not wit in it selfe, but our proud conceit of wit, and too much resting in the seat of reason, which makes us runne into error; for that will not suffer us to subiect our selves to the simplicity of the word of God. We must therefore take heed of it. In the second place, in that the Apostle in the fourth verse gave testimony of the faith of the Colossians, and now prayed for the increase of their knowledge of the will of God,

Wee learne that such as truly beleeve in Christ, and are able to testifie their faith to others, yet have their want of knowledge of the will of God, and may be ignorant of some things revealed. The Lord gives them not a full measure of knowledge at the first, but onely some degree which is after ward encreased. Thus our Saviour dealt with his Apostles, when they had confessed that he was the Christ the sonne of the living God, *Mat. 16.* yet they knew not the Articles of his death and resurrection; it is therefore said, *vers. 21.* from that time forth Iesus began to shew unto his Disciples, that hee must goe unto Ierusalem, and suffer many things of the Elders, and of the high Priests, and Scribes, and bee slaine, and rise againe the third day. Wee reade, *Act. 18.* though *Apollas* was an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, which did argue an excellent measure of knowledge, yet he had his want of knowledge: even two of his Auditors, *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, as we finde, *vers. 26.* tooke him home with them, and expounded the way of God more perfectly unto him: yea *Saint Paul* testified of himselfe, that he might encrease in comfort and strength of faith, by the faith of the Romans, *Rom. 1. 12.*

Now the reason why the Lord gives knowledge unto us by degrees is this, because though a mans mind (enlightened and sanctified) bee of great capacity, and will receive a great measure of knowledge, yet it is able to receive but little at once; it is like a violl, or a glasse, with a narrow mouth, that must have water or some other liquid matter put into it, drop after drop. Hence it is said, that our Saviour preached the word unto the people, as they were able to heare and understand it, *Mark. 4. 33.*

And is it so, that the Lord gives the knowledge of his will by degrees, by little and little? then let every one of us looke so to receive it, let every one attend with diligence on the ordinance of God, the preaching of his word, the ordinary meanes of knowledge, and let him looke to receive knowledge of the will of God by degrees, one measure after another, or one measure unto another, for wee must retaine and hold things heard and learned, and

Use.

Having some knowledge of Gods will revealed in his word, wee must not thinke that we are able to goe on by the strength of our owne will.

Doct. 4.

True beleevers being able to testifie their faith to others may want knowledge of some things revealed in the word of God.

Reason.

True beleevers being able to testifie their faith to others may want knowledge of some things revealed in the word of God.

Use.

We must come to receive knowledge of the will of God by degrees.

adde unto them (every time we heare) a further measure of knowledge, otherwise wee cannot looke to bee fulfilled with knowledge, as the Apostle here prayed. A vessell that hath a narrow mouth, and an hole in the bottome ever open, can never be fild by powring water into it: no more can our mindes be filled with knowledge, being hard to receive, and having no retentive faculty, no power to retaine things heard, and learned: but as fast as they are powred in, they runne out, and passe away without profit: which is a fault that doth rest upon many hearers of the word, who heare many things, and happily understand and receive them with ioy for the present, but after a while become forgetfull hearers, as Iam. 1. 25. and let slip the things they have heard, as if they had never heard them. These cannot come to the hearing of the word, to bee further filled, because they have nothing but emptinesse in them: the things formerly received are gone: they are like the mill turned about daily but with new water. Wel, let such loose and wretchlesse hearers consider, that it is not the hearing, the bare understanding, nor the delight for the present, but the power of the doctrine of the word remaining in us, that shall save our soules. By forgetting and letting slip out of our mindes good things received, we decline and decay in all good duties. the Lord therefore perswadeth with the Church of *Sardi*, to recover herselfe from her declining: by remembring and holding fast things received, Revel. 3. 3. the holy Ghost saith, that we ought diligently to give heed to the things which we have heard. least at any time wee should let them slip, Hebr. 2. 1. 2. and marke the weight of his reason following, strengthened by comparison. If the word spoken by Angels (that is to say, the Law) was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a iust recompence of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, that is to say, the Gospell, which at the first began to bee preached by the Lord: which we do, when we let slip the things we have heard; and so we bring on our selves punishment proportionable to the excellency of the Gospell and the first preacher of it, Christ Iesus.

Dott. 5.

A small measure of knowledge of the will of God, will not serve to direct us in the way to salvation.

Reason.

One thing more may be noted from these words, namely this: that it is not a small measure of knowledge of the will of God that must direct us in the way of life and salvation. The Apostle therefore here prayes that the Colossians might be fulfilled with knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spirituall understanding: and Phil. 1. 9. he saith, *This I pray, that your love may be bound yet more and more, in knowledge, and in all iudgement.*

One speciall reason of this is, because the knowledge of Gods will must not onely guide us in particular actions of life which are innumerable: but must guide the inward motions of the minde, will and affections which are most wayward, and hard to be brought into subiection to any good: for a man may be able sometimes to bridle himselfe in outward actions but not to restrain the thoughts of his heart.

Vse.

We must not content our selves with a smattering knowledge of Gods will revealed.

Let us not therefore content our selves with a smattering, and a generall knowledge of Gods will revealed. A man in his trade will not content himselfe with small skill, if hee bee able to reach further: and shall wee then rest contented with a little, and small measure of knowledge of Gods will revealed in his word? Looke how much knowledge wee have of Gods will, so much knowledge have wee of God himselfe, and of our owne salvation: because God revealeth himselfe, and the meanes of salvation, in the word, and without the knowledge of that, there is no knowledge of God or of salvation. They that know not in some measure the will of God revealed in his word, cannot know God, and so cannot know Gods mercy for their owne salvation: for if wee know not God, God will never know us to our comfort; therefore let us not content our selves with a small measure of knowledge of Gods will revealed in his word, but labour daily for a greater measure and encrease.

create. In the last words of this verse the Apostle sets downe two things wherein the knowledge of Gods will doth consist; namely, wisdom and understanding, and both spirituall.

The word (*wisdom*) hath many acceptions in the Scripture: sometimes it is but to signifie an evill qualitie, the wisdom of the world properly called craft and subtilty. 2 Sam. 14. 2. Sometimes it is taken in a good sence, and then also diversly: as sometimes to signifie the doctrine of wisdom, 1. Cor. 2. 6. Sometimes the habit or qualitie of wisdom in the word, and so it is taken in this place, because it standeth here in relation to the will of God; and by it is meant an ability or power of the mind above nature, whereby the mind being cleared and disburthened of naturall deluesse, unbeliefe, ignorance and vanity, is able soundly and truly to apprehend, to acknowledge and embrace the knowne truth of the word of God as the Lord saith on the contrary, *They have rejected the word of the Lord, and when wisdom is in them* Jer. 8. 6. though they had the law amongst them, verse 3. yet because they did not truly apprehend and believe it, they are said to reject it, and consequently had no wisdom in them: when it is cleare, that then we are wise in the knowledge of the will of God, when wee truly apprehend, acknowledge and embrace the knowne truth of his word.

The word (*all*) doth signifie all kind of wisdom, but a full measure of spirituall wisdom necessary to salvation. So we finde the word used, 1 Cor. 13. 2. *All faith*, that is, not all kindes of faith, iustifying faith is not there meant, but a full measure of faith of working miracles.

For the word (*understanding*) not to say any thing of the distinction of it into Theoricall and practicall, by that word is meant, an ability and power whereby the mind is able to apply the knowne truth of the word, to the good ordering both of particular inward affections, and outward things and actions; as tyme, place, and person shall require. Thus *Salomon* prayed that God would give him *an understanding heart*, 1. king. 3. 9. or *understanding*, whereby the affections of his heart might bee ordered, and hee might bee able to Iudge and discern truly between good and bad in particular causes and controversies, and give sentence accordingly. Now both these, (*wisdom*, and *understanding*) must be spirituall, that is, wrought in us by the spirit of Christ, on whom resteth the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsell and strength, the spirit of knowledge, and of the feare of the Lord, Isa. 11. 2. Thus then are these words to be conceived: as if the Apostle had said, in a sufficient true and sound apprehension of the truth revealed in the word of God, and in a particular application of the same, to the good ordering of all particular affections of your hearts, and the actions of your lives, as the circumstance of time, place, and person shall require, wrought in you by the Spirit of Christ.

Now in that the Apostle calles knowledge of the will of God, standing in true apprehension of the truth revealed in his word, (*wisdom*) we are taught that they (indeed) are truly wise, who rightly conceive, acknowledge and embrace the truth of the word of God; that is, they who have an eye vpon the word, and see the truth of that for their guide in all things, and are able to governe themselves wisely, both in respect of inward affection, and outward action. Hence it was that *David* said, that by the commandments of God he was wiser than his enemies, had more understanding than his teachers, and the ancient, Psal. 119. 98, 99, 100. And no marvell though it was thus with *David*, there is reason to leade vs to thinke, that those who understand what the will of the Lord is, are most wise, and indeed truly wise.

First, because the will of the Lord made knowne in the word, is the wisdom of the Lord revealed, manifesting such things, as the wisdom of flesh and blood

Dott. 6.

They are truly wise, who rightly conceive, acknowledge, and embrace the truth of the word of God.

Reason 1.

blood cannot reach unto: therefore they who are able by a supernaturall light to conceive things contained in that must needs be most wise, according to the nature of the things understood, as they who are able to conceive and carry in mind the best rules of policy, are iustly accounted most politicke.

Againe, they must needs be most wise, who are enabled to provide for their owne good estate, and that for ever, such are they who truly conceive and embrace the truth revealed in the word, for that is able to make wise to the kingdome of God and eternall salvation, 2 Tim. 3. 15.

Object.

Some may say, we reade that our Saviour saith, Luke 16. 8. *that the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light*: though they bee enlightened by the Spirit of God: how then is it true that they are most wise who rightly conceive and embrace the truth of the word of God?

Answer

For answer, wee must marke the restraint of our Saviours speech. Hee saith not in generall that *they are wiser than the children of light*: but with a limitation he restraineth their wisdom to their owne generation to the things of this world, that in respect of them they are wiser.

Againe, if the speech runne thus, in their generation, than the children of light in theirs, hee speakes as it commonly falles out, that the children of this world in their generation are wiser than the children of light in theirs, not because the word is not able to make them wiser than the children of the world: but because of our corruption, wee commonly reach not to that measure of wisdom wee ought to doe: and so this makes nothing against the truth of the conclusion delivered, that they are truly wise who rightly conceive and embrace the truth of the word of God, for in that they reach not that measure of wisdom which they ought, it is in respect of their corruption, and the remainder of sinne in them.

Use.

They that would be truly wise, must labour to know, acknowledge, and embrace the truth of Gods Word.

Would we then (for use of this) bee truly wise? (no doubt every one desires it) would wee have that wisdom that will make us wise to eternall happiness? then labour wee rightly to conceive, acknowledge, and embrace the truth revealed in the word of God, that is, the wisdom of God, and able to make us wise and provident for our eternall good. And to leade us on in this, consider wee but this one thing, many men in the world carry a great shew of wisdom: and indeed they are wise in their kinde, but they wanting this (if we observe it) wee shall finde that the Lord doth catch and confound them in their wisdom: and as hee dealt with *Achitophel*, hee turnes their plots and devices into foolishnesse: nay, which is more familiar and easie for us to observe, wee shall finde, that some that are renowned for wisdom in the world, and yet want this wisdom from the word; they some way or other discover themselves to bee but starke fooles: for consider it, doe not we see many times such as are able to speake well, and wisely, and to give good counsell to others, and to manage their owne outward affaires with some good discretion, that they notwithstanding are tainted and stained with some notorious sinne? yea, they are very monsters in the outrage of sinne: are not the wisest men of this world, many times grinding usurers, extortioners, oppressours, greedy covetous, hard dealers with their brethren, such as defraud poore labourers of their hire? yea, are they not sometimes Ale-house and Taverne-haunters, Whore-hunters, and such like? If wee looke into the world wee may easily observe it, that one way or other they discover the weakenesse of that wisdom the world doth so much admire in them, the Lord doth punish the pride of their wisdom with some foule sinne, and doth suffer them to yeeld to the subtilty of Satan, and deceit of sinne, to make knowne their follie by their sin, he doth paint out their folly in their faces, and set a *Noverint universis* upon them: be it knowne to all men, that these whom you account iolly wise men behold they are meere fooles. This must serve to teach us, and to stirre us up not

to rest in such kinde of wisdom, as is found in the men of this world, but seek after that which is derived from the word, and so from God himselfe the fountaine of all true wisdom.

We are further to marke that the Apostle in this place, loynes wisdom and understanding together. Whence it followes for our instruction, that it is not enough for us to conceive and acknowledge the truth of Gods will, either commanding duty, promising mercy or threatening iudgement, but wee must apply it to the ordering of our lives in particular actions: for as the knowledge of Gods will is brought unto us, by the ministry of the word, not onely in the information of our understanding and iudgement, but in the use of instruction in the way of righteousness, and reformation of corruptions, both of heart and life, so it must bee received. Hence it is that *David* saith, that the word was a lanterne unto his feet, and a light unto his paths, *Psalme 119. 105*, wee are to marke, that hee saith not, it was a light unto him to enlighten him, but to his feet and path; giving us to understand, that hee did not rest in his illumination by the word, and in his apprehension of the truth, but he further applyed it to the guiding of his particular steps in the wayes of the Lord, to the particular actions of his life: and indeed there is great reason, why we should not content our selves with the knowledge of the truth of the word, no nor yet with a temporary good liking of it, without application of it, as particular occasion is every day offered unto us: if we doe, wee shall finde, that we shall not only faint under many afflictions, but we shall faile in our best actions, sinne will insinuate it selfe, and get within them: hypocrisie will get into our prayers, hearing of the word, receiving of the Sacraments and almest giving; yea we shall fall into many knowne sinne. Consider the example of *David*, he doubtlesse knew the nature and quality of adultery, and the iudgements of God attending on it: yet because he made no speciall use and application of his knowledge, hee fell into that sinne.

We see then the necessity of this duty: let us now suffer our selves in a word or two, to bee stirred up to the practise of it, and to this end know, that if wee conceive what is the will of the Lord in our best actions, in our hearing of the word, prayer, receiving of the Sacraments, if we understand that wee are to performe them by faith, repentance, feare, love, reverence, zeale, obedience and humility: and doe not apply this our knowledge, to the forming of them in this maner, they become sinne unto us, and abominable in the sight of God, even like the sacrifices of the Iewes, *Isai. 66. 3*, yea I dare bee bold to say, that the knowledge of the death and passion of Christ, as it is a singular knowledge, so without application it brings a singular iudgement; if it be not applyed both for the remission of our finnes and our sanctification, it shall be a great encrease of our condemnation: if then we would not have our best actions turned to sinne, yea, our knowledge of Christ a scale of condemnation: let us not content our selves with the knowledge of the truth of the word of God, but learne to apply it to particulars as occasion shall be offered.

Verf. 10. *That ye might walke worthy of the Lord, and please him in all things, being fruitfull in all good workes, and increasing in the knowledge of God.*

THe Apostle sets downe in this verse the end of his prayer for the Colossians: to what end he prayed for them, namely, that they might walke worthy of the Lord. Now because they might doubt how farre that extends, to walke worthy of the Lord, in the next words he explaines it, even to the pleasing of him in all things. Yet, but might some say, how shall we walke so worthy of the Lord, as that we may please him in all things? The Apostle in the words following doth tell us, by being fruitfull in all good workes, which is amplified in the

Dut. 7.

It is not sufficient to understand and take notice of Gods will, but it must be applyed to our particular occasions.

Reason 2.

Else shall sinne insinuate it selfe and get within our best actions.

Vse.

Apply wee therefore our knowledge diligently, to the particular actions of our lives.

Verf. 10.

Generall resolution of the tenth verse.

Particular in-
terpretations.

Doct. 1.
Our know-
ledge of Gods
will ought to
end in practise.

Vse.
Looke we that
our life be pro-
portionable to
our knowlchge
and profession.
Note.

the last words, by the effect of such fruitfulness, namely, a further measure of illumination and knowledge of God, [*increasing in the knowledge of God.*] These are the generall parts of this verse: come wee to the words as they are laid downe by the Apostle. The word [*walke*] is well knowne to them that have any litle reading in the Scriptures, (who reade with observation of the phrase) to be borrowed from travellers, signifying to live, or to hold on a course of life either generally in the duties of Christianity, or in some particular place and calling: to walke worthy of the Lord, is not as the Popish sort expound it, to live, so as that by Christian good life, wee answer the iustice of God, according to the rigour and exact rule of iustice, propounded in the morall Law: but that we walke in uprightness, and sincerity of heart, as it is, Gen. 17. 1. *walke before mee, and be thou upright:* and so as it becommeth them who are called by the Gospell, to be the sonnes and daughters of God, and to the hope of salvation. the Apostle exhorteth to *walke worthy of our vocation*, Ephes. 5. 1. and that *our conversation be as it becommeth the Gospell of Christ*, Philip. 1. 27. by which wee are called to bee the sonnes of God, and to the hope of salvation. These two places serue to expound this, and shew that the words are thus to bee conceived, as if the Apostle had said, that yee might live both in respect of the duties of Christianity, of your particular place and calling, uprightly as in the presence of the Lord; and as it becommeth them who are called by the Gospell to be the children of God, and to the hope of salvation.

First, in that the Apostle prayed for the Colossians, that they might be fulfilled with the knowledge of Gods will, to this end, that they might walke worthy of the Lord; we are taught, that our knowledge of the will of God must end in practise. Looke what measure of knowledge wee have, wee must expresse it in the like measure of holinesse and obedience. For why? the will of the Lord revealed, teaching either things to be believed, and those are to bee effectually to stirre us up to holinesse, as the Apostle saith, Ephes. 4. 20. *ye have not so learned Christ, yee have not so learned things to bee believed concerning Christ, as that your learning and knowledge of him should leave you in your corruption, to walke as other Gentiles doe, that believe not: or else the will of the Lord revealed teacheth things to bee done, which indeed are never truly knowne of us, but in the practise of them, as we know not in such sort as wee ought (what any that is over us, either Father or Master or governour) doth command to bee done, unlesse wee doe it: for that is the end of their command, which is not knowne but in the practise.* Again, knowledge in many places of the Scripture is compared to light, and wherefore is light given, but that wee should walke in it? Wherefore shines the Sunne, but that a man should goe out to his labour? so the light of knowledge is given that wee should walke in it. It is the argument of the Apostle, Ephes. 5. 8. *For we were once darkenesse, but now are light in the Lord: walke as children of light. The night is past, and the day is at hand. let us therefore cast away the workes of darkenesse, and let us put on the armour of light, so that wee walke honestly as in the day, not in gluttony and drunkennesse, neither in chambering and wantonnesse, nor in strife and envying.* Rom. 13. 12. 13.

For the use of this poynt note we this: there is never a one of us living under the preaching of the Gospell, but wee will seeme to have gotten thus much knowledge, that we are to repent of our sinnes, and believe in Christ, that we may be iustified and saved: we will thinke there is great disgrace and indignity offered the meanest of us, if we be told wee know not these things: though few indeed know them as they ought. Now then as wee profess that wee know in some measure the doctrine of faith and repentance: so let us looke that our life be proportionable to our knowledge, that we walke in that light that is given unto us, take heed we be not found sleeping in the day light, and standing still and

and idle in the midſt of our knowledge: and in this caſe beware of the ſubtiltie and cunning of the Devill, who ſo perſwades with many, that though they know faith and repentance to be the way to life and ſalvation, yet they neede not ſo preſently, and ſo ſoone as they know it, to walke in that way but that it is enough for them to enter into that path at the houre of their death, and ſufficient to expreſſe the knowledge of faith and repentance in death, and not in the courſe of their life: and (to make his perſwaſion plauſible and powerfull) he comes upon them, as hee came upon our Saviour Chriſt himſelfe, with ſcripture, it is written: and hee telleth them they may find it in the booke of God; and that the theefe on the Croſſe repented at his laſt hower, and was received to mercie: and by this hee doth ſo bewitch many, that they mocke at the doctrine of timely repentance, and ſooth up themſelves in their prophaneſſe, and ſay (cuſh) if wee may have but time to call for mercy at our death, it is enough, it is no matter for walking in the way of repentance; what ſhould a man trouble himſelfe that way. till he grow old, or bee ſicke and lie upon his death bed: repentance ſhall ſave a man at any time; and wee hope to dye repentant, and the ſervants of God. Thus doth the devill delude and deceive many a poore ſoule, wee muſt take heed of this ſubtiltie and ſtrong deluſion of Satan: and that we may be armed and ſtrengthened againſt it, conſider: Firſt, that though true repentance be never too late, yet late repentance is ſeldome or never found. A man that hath lived a lewd and a vicious life, and is now at the poynt to yeeld vp the ghoſt, ſorrowing and grieving, may juſtly doubt of his ſorrow, whether it be true godly ſorrow or noe, though it be about his ſinne, becauſe he cannot well perceive whether it proceed from a loathing of his ſinne, or from a feare of death, and whether he be humbled before the mercy of the Lord; or in reſpect of his puniſhing hand: we have one example indeede in the Scripture, the theefe on the Croſſe that repented truly at his laſt hower, but we have a thouſand to the contrary: Now what a madneſſe is it for a man to caſt himſelfe on ſuch a dangerous poynt, to enter into ſuch a way wherein only one hath eſcaped, and thouſands have periſhed:

Againe, though God have promiſed forgivenenſſe to true repentant ſinners, yet hath hee not promiſed repentance to every ſinner, that every ſinner ſhall repent when hee liſt, we finde not that in all the booke of God: this wee finde, that he threatneth ſuch as know his will touching repentance, and walke not accordingly, but ſleepe ſecurely in their ſinnes, that hee will come upon them ſodainely, yea, ſo as he will bee ſure to finde them ſleeping. The Lord threatned the Church of Sardi, that he would come upon her like a theefe, Revel. 3. 3 who watcheth his time, and commeth when men are aſleepe: yea more then that, for the theefe by making a noyſe happily awaketh thoſe that are lodged in the houſe that he breakes into; but the Lord ſaith further to that Church, Thou ſhalt be ſtill aſleepe, and ſhalt not know what hower I will come upon thee: This wee ſee verified upon many, who eyther are cut off by ſudden death in the very act of ſinne, or if they have time given, yet the Lord either takes a way underſtanding from them, or ſends upon them ſuch an horror and fearefull expectation of his wrath, that they cannot repent: if then wee would not have our ſorrow doubtfull, even ſuch as we our ſelves may juſtly ſuſpect not to be godly ſorrow, but rather ariſing from the weakneſſe of the fleſh, or bitterneſſe of paine, if we would not have the Lords wrath to ſurpriſe us, and to take us ſleeping in ſinne, and cut us off ſuddenly in our ſinne, let us learne to expreſſe the doctrine of repentance, not onely in death, but in our lives, and to walke according to the meaſure of our knowledge of faith and repentance.

In the next place, in that the Apoſtle ſaith, that the end of our knowledge of the will of God muſt bee a walking worthy of the Lord, that is, as becommeth ſuch as are called by the Goſpell to bee his children, we are taught that we muſt

D. 2.

Our life must
be proportion-
ed to the
measure of
Gods goodness
towards us.

Reason.

Vse 1.

It will serve to
be a sovereign
restraint from
sinning against
God.

Interpreta-
tion.

came out our lives according to the measure of Gods mercy towards us, wee having received mercy from the Lord, wee must walke according to the measure of mercy vouchsafed us, as to be the sonnes and daughters of God; we must lead our lives in a proportionable measure of holiness and obedience, and walke as becommeth sonnes, as the Apostle exhorteth, Ephes. 5. 2. 3. *Walke in love even as Christ hath loved us, and hath given himselfe for us, to bee an offering and sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour to God. But fornication and all uncleannesse, or covetousnesse, let it not be once named among you, as it becommeth Saints: there is the ground of his exhortation, that having received so great mercy and grace to be Saints, we are to walke as it is fitting the Saints of God; and there is great reason why wee should so walke, because as the earth rendreth to the husbandman the fruit of his paines bestowed upon it; so wee should render to the Lord the fruit of his mercy bestowed upon us, and that is repentance, Rom. 4. 2. a renouncing of all ungodlinesse, and a living soberly and righteously, and godly in this present world, Tit. 2. 12.*

And this is a duty of great good use and consequence, if it were thought on and remembred, it would hold us backe from many notorious sinnes. would men bee so prophane? would they breake out into such blasphemous oaths, such cursed speaking, such drunkennesse, such filthinesse as many doe; if they did keepe in their minde a register, and remembrance of Gods mercies and favours towards them in their bodies and soules, in their friends, in their Country, in their magistrates, in their ministers, or any other way? no doubtlesse, if such persons as are carried with violence against their neighbours, to smite them with the verome of their railing and slanderous tongues, would but call to minde when they are in their heate, and their raging and madd mood the Lords mercy towards themselves, how the Lord hath dealt with them in great mercy, both in their creation and preservation, and in many other innumerable blessings, and (as they perswade themselves) in the greatest mercy of all, the forgiveness of their sinnes, and that they are to walke accordingly. Would they then goe on their fury? no without question, then as *Nehemiah* said, Cap. 6. 11. should such a man as I see? so they would say, should such a man or such a woman as I that have received so great mercy from the Lord, should I so farre forget the Lords mercy, as to rage, rave, and soile out mine owne shame against my brethren? no, no, I will rather suffer any iniury, then I will do such wickednesse and sin against my gracious and mercifull God: this no doubt would bee the fruit of the remembrance of this duty. Let us then be carefull to remember and think upon it, that we are to walke in a measure of holiness answerable to Gods mercy towards us; and know that if we doe not so walke, we turne Gods grace into wantonnesse, and then certainly the Lord will turne his his mercy into iudgement.

Now to the words following (and please him in all things) here the Apostle makes knowne how farre walking worthy of the Lord doth extend, namely to the pleasing of him in all things, the originall words doth signifie onely thus much, to all pleasing, but having reference and respect to that which (goes before the walking worthy of the Lord,) they may well bee thus rendered, to his liking in all things, to the pleasing of him in all things. Now to please the Lord is (in a word) to obey the will of the Lord, according to that comparative speech, 1 Sam. 15. 22. *To obey is better then sacrifice:* where we see, that to please the Lord, is to obey the will of the Lord in all things, that is in thought, word and deed.

Wee cannot please the Lord in all things, for who is it that sinnes not? It is true, we are not to looke what we can doe, but what wee ought to doe, and what is our duty, wee are to endeavour and to breath after that, even to please the Lord in all things, yea to desire and seeke after it, as much as our appointed

polated food, to hunger and thirst after it: for upon that, our Saviour pronounceth a blessing, Math. 5. 9. we are to labour in truth and sincerity, to obey the will of God in all things, and if wee faile in any thing, (as we cannot chuse but faile in many things) yet we so endeavouring, the Lord accepts our imperfect obedience in Christ, in and by whom the weake obedience of true beleevers is accepted, as the Apostle saith, 1 Pet. 2. 5. Thus then are these words to be conceived, as if the Apostle had said, even to the hearty and sincere, though imperfect obedience of the will of God, in thought, word, and deed, which is pleasing unto him by the mitigation and moderation of the Gospell: whereby the Lord doth moderate the rigour of the Law, and accept of our imperfect obedience as pleasing unto him in Christ.

In that the Apostle doth deliver the sincere obedience of true beleevers, under the title and terme, not of satisfying, but of pleasing the Lord, and that onely in Christ: We are taught, that though we walke as becommeth the children of God, yet wee do not thereby satisfie the iustice of God. Our true and most sincere obedience to the will of God, is not able to stand without reproofe in the sight of God. The greatest and highest degree of excellency it can reach unto, is in Christ, to please the Lord. Wee shall find that the Apostle doth often inculcate, and beare upon this point: that our walking as becommeth us, doth please the Lord, but never that it doth satisfie his iustice, 1 Theff. 4. 1. Heb. 13. 16. The cavill of the Papists on that place is not worth the answering: they make (*promittitur*) to have a passive signification, and so no Latine word, but a barbarous terme.

The poynt delivered may further bee confirmed by this reason: there is no good thing done by any beleever and regenerate person, but it is stained by his intermeddling corruption: Even our righteousness is a menstruous clout, and therefore not our best and most sincere obedience can satisfie the iustice of God, and stand in his sight without reproofe.

Against this reason the Papists take exception, and say. Is the best obedience of true beleevers stained with sinner? then it cannot please God, for (say they) shall we say, that a sinfull worke is a pleasing sacrifice to God? that is blasphemie: the Lord hates sinner and all sinfull workes, so that either you must make the obedience of true beleevers not sinfull, or if sinfull, then not pleasing to God.

Wee answer againe, that the obedience of true beleevers, is not absolutely sinfull: for then it could never be pleasing to God. it is holy and good, for the kinde, as it is enioyned by God, and as coming from the Spirit of God, but in the manner of doing, it faileth, and comes short of that perfection Gods iustice requires.

Againe, the Lord doth pardon the sinfulness of the obedience of true beleevers, and so accept of it in Christ and in him, not in it selfe, as if pleasing to God: and so it still remaines a truth, that the most, our best obedience can bee advanced unto us, is to be pleasing to God. This must serve to informe our iudgments, and to strengthen us against the contrary opinion of the papists, who hold and teach, that the obedience of beleevers doth answer the iustice of God, and make them more iust in the sight of God.

We must hold it for a truth, that our best obedience is so farre from satisfying the iustice of God, as that it pleaseth not God, unlesse he behold it in mercy, and in the face of Iesus Christ.

Marke we further what the Apostle adioynes to the pleasing of the Lord, that it must be in all things. Our instruction thence is this, that true and sincere obedience to the will of God, must bee entire. Such as will approve themselves to the Lord, & please him, must sincerely (without doubting) obey his will in every thing, howsoever we cannot reach to that perfection, to please God in all things,

Doct. 3.

Our most sincere obedience to Gods will, cannot stand without reproofe in the sight of God.

Reason.

Exception.

Answer.

Vse.

Confutation of the Papists.

Doct. 4.

True obedience to the will of God, must be entire.

things, yet it must be the purpose of our hearts, wee must purpose to please him in all things, and not to offend him in any thing: if wee doe, it must bee against our purpose. It is said of *Iosias*, that hee turned to God according to the whole Law, 2 King 22.2. and of *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, that they walked in all the commandements of God, Luke 1.6 which is not to bee understood, as that they kept the law in perfection, but in the purpose of their hearts: they did not wittingly breake the commandements of God. And the reasons why we are thus to please God in our purpose and endeavour, are these.

Reason.

First, because the commandements of God are so conioyned and linked together, as the transgression of one is the breaking of all, for hee that breakes one is guilty of all, 1am. 1.10.

Reason.

Againe, hee that lives in the manifest breach of any one commandement of God, if occasion be offered, he will breake all: he being not regenerate (as hee doth plainly shew by his sinne) if it be for his profit or pleasure, he will breake all the commandements of God. Hence it followes necessarily, that sincere obedience to the will of God must be intire.

Vse

He that lives in any one knowne sinne, cannot perswade himselfe that he is pleasing to God.

Note.

Let no man therefore perswade himselfe, that he is one pleasing God, because the world which sees but the outside, cannot convince him of sinne, when his owne conscience tels him, hee lives in the manifest breach of some commandement of God. Neither let any one flatter himselfe, that his waies please God, because hee doth prosper in outward things, as many thinke, they are highly in Gods favour, because they have prosperity: that is a leaden rule, onely then we please the Lord, when our obedience to his will is intire, when wee purpose and endeavour to prove our hearts and lives unto him in all things. And to helpe us forward in this, know, that wee can never have assurance of our owne salvation, till wee have this holy purpose and godly endeavour: so long as wee live in the manifest breach of any commandement of God (though it be only knowne to our selves) our conscience will not be settled, it will at one time or other rise up and condemne us, and if our conscience condemne us, God is greater and knoweth all things, 1 Ioh. 3.20. if then wee would not bee in continuall doubt of our owne salvation, which is a fearefull step to desperation: let us put on a godly purpose of heart, to please God in all things, both in thought, word and deed.

Interpretation.

The words following, are an answer to a doubt that might arise from the former part of this verse: for some might say, How shall wee walke worthy of the Lord? The answer is, by being fruitfull in all good workes, that word (*fruitfull*) is metaphoricall, and borrowed from trees that beare fruit: that as fruit-bearing trees bring forth fruit according to their kinde: so we are to bring forth good workes. And (to be fruitfull) is to bring forth good workes, that is to say, holy and good actions, for good workes are opposed to actuall sinne, we find them proposed under the name of actuall righteousness, and set against actuall sinne, 1 Ioh. 3.7.8. where *S. Iohn* makes opposition betweene doing righteousness and committing sinne. And to doe righteousness, is to performe a good worke, therefore, by good workes we are to understand holy and good actions. Whereas the Apostle saith further (*in all*) his meaning is in all sorts of good workes, inward and outward in body and mind, to insist in the Apostles owne similitude, as fruitfull trees bring not forth fruit only, on one bough or branch, but on every branch plenty of fruit: so good workes (the fruits of beleeving Christians) must be brought forth, not only by the hand, the foot, the tongue, and other members, but in al the powers of the soule, & in al & every member of the body.

Doct. 5.

Good workes are fruits of faith.

Now to the doctrine: first, we are to marke, that the Apostle having testified the faith of the Colossians, here hee saith, that hee prayed further for them, that they might be fruitfull in all good workes, whence wee may conclude, that good workes follow faith, and are fruits of faith. We shall finde this point if we observe

obferue it constantly, taught by the Apofle. For firft, he teacheth that wee are iuftified by faith in Chrift, and then fanctified, and that our fanctification is a fruit of our iuftification; and therefore good workes which are part of fanctification, they follow faith, and are fruits of faith in them that are iuftified. Hence it is that he faith, that loue (and fo the duties of loue, good workes) come out of a pure hart, good confcience, & faith vnfaignedly, 1. Tim. 1. 5. and that text cleerly proves this truth, it needs no further light for manifeftation of it.

The ufe of this poynt may be this; Are good workes fruits of faith? then it is erroneous, nay, very abfurd to fay as the Papifts doe, that they are the forme and life of faith, not to make faith to be faith, but to make it good, lively and available to iuftification, for fo they teach. Now this is very groffe, who knowes not that it is contrary to all reason, being contrary to the courfe of nature to fay that the fruit giues life to the tree, every man that knowes any thing can fay to the contrary, that the tree gives life to the fruit, fo faith gives life to good workes not good workes to faith, to make it available to iuftification, the life and forme, of faith, by which it is effectual to iuftifie, is fpeciall affiance, and trust on Gods mercy in Chrift: and though fuch faith cannot bee without workes after it have iuftified, they follow upon it as fruits, yet doe they not concur with faith to the forming of it in the aft of iuftification, they having relation to faith as fruits, they onely as fruits declare it to be effectual in it felfe, they giue not life unto it.

In the next place, in that the Apofle is not content to fay [*that ye might walke worthy of the Lord*] but he addes, bringing forth, or being fruitfull, we are taught that our obedience muft not be only inward and habituall, we muft not content our felues with the having of any grace, be it never fo excellent, be it faith or the feare of God, but we are to fhew it and let it appeare in the aftions of faith and of the feare of God, as fruitfull trees in their feafon doe bud and bloffome, and their fruits grow to ripenefle, and yeeld comfort to the owners: fo our obedience and fubiection to Gods will, and grace wrought in us, muft fhew it felfe in the fruits of it, to the glory of God, and the good of our brethren: and hence it is, that the godly are called trees planted by the water fide, which bring forth fruit in due feafon Pfa. 1. 2. yea, fo planted, as that in refpect of their rooting they feele not when the heate commeth, and the yeare of drought cannot make them ceafe yealding fruit, Ier. 17. 8.

Thus it is with all Gods children, and thus it ought to be with all of us, that have any grace wrought in us, we are to manifeft it in the fruits of grace: and there is great reason for this, for why? the Lord will have his grace that is in us, knowne both to our felues and others, that is the end of all the Lords dealing with us, either by prosperitie or adverfity, to discover what is within us, what grace there is in our hearts: we our felves cannot know whether wee have any grace in us or no, but by the fruits of it: for example, the fappe of a tree being good, the tree is good, yet it is not knowne to bee good by the fappe, but by the fruits of it: fo wee are not knowne to be good, and to have grace in us, but by the fruits of grace: and therefore the grace that is wrought in us, muft appeare in the fruits of it: the feare of God muft fhew it felfe in the fruits of it, yea, in the proper fruits, fuch as properly iflue and come from the grace of Gods feare, wrought in the harts of Gods children, and thofe are fpecially thefe, even a trembling and a reverent awe of God in prosperitie, and a willing and ioyfull fubiection to his will in adverfity not to bee lift up in pride, or to lie fecurely in fenne in prosperitie, or to be utterly dejected in time of adverfity, but to tremble before the Lord in prosperitie, when the harts of the wicked are moft lift up, and to be inwardly comforted in the Lord in time of adverfity: thefe be the fruits that muft be sent forth from the inward roote of the true feare of God, and thus the grace of God that is in us, what foeuer it bee, muft

G

appeare

Ufe.

It is erroneous to fay, that workes are the forme and life of faith.

Dact. 6.

Our obedience to Gods will, muft not be only inward and habituall.

Ufe.

So it ought to be with all that have any grace wrought in them.

appeare in the fruits of it.

And that we may be stirred up to this duty, consider wee that the Lord will not acknowledge any grace in us, unlesse it appeare in the fruits. The Lord saith to *Abraham*, when he saw his willingnesse to offer his sonne in sacrifice. *Now I know that thou fearest me, seeing for my sake thou hast not spared thine onely sonne*, Gen. 22. 13. The Lord knew what the heart was in *Abraham* before, he knowes the hearts of all his, but then by that fruit he did acknowledge his true feare to be in him. So doth the Lord then acknowledge any grace in us, when it appeares in the fruits of it. Againe, wee must know, if we content our selves with the habit of righteousness in the having of any grace in our hearts, the Papists shall rise up in iudgement against us, and condemne us, for they bring forth the fruits of their false religion, and blind devotion: yea, the very Atheist, and vilest Miscreants of the world shall stand up in iudgement against us, for they walke after their lusts: they shew the corruption of their hearts in all cursed fruits of impiety and sinne: let it then be a shame for us to be behind them: let as many of us as perswade our selves we are religious and fearing God, be stirred up to expresse the power and fruit of our religion and feare: that so the Lord may acknowledge his owne grace in us, wrought by his owne good Spirit, and that neither Papists nor Atheists may ever (by the evidence of their unfavoury fruits) rise up in iudgement and condemne us.

Doct. 7.
We must expresse grace received in all good fruits.

Note we further, the Apostle saith [*fruitfull in all good workes*] whence we are taught, that wee are to expresse the grace that is in us by all good fruits: for as true regeneration is universall, a transformation of the whole man into the image of Christ, so it must appeare and shew it selfe in all the powers of the soule and if we be able to doe much, we are not to content our selves with doing a little: as the Lord shall enable us, we must be fruitfull in all good workes: and this indeed is a sure testimony of the soundnesse of religion.

Before we leave these words, a cavill of the Popish sort occasioned from this, and the like places of Scripture, is to be answered. Hence the Papists take occasion to wrangle and to reason against that truth taught by our Church that the best workes of beleevers are stained with sinne: after this manner (say they) we finde that the holy Ghost here and in other places of Scripture calleth many workes of beleevers, good workes, and wee must needs thinke the holy Ghost speaketh the truth: but if they were infected with sinne, they could not bee truly called good: for it can be no good worke that faileth either in substance or in circumstance, or that hath any one fault in it. *Bonum ex integra causa, malum ex quolibet defectu* that is truly good, that is every way good, and that is bad that hath any defect; therefore you must either say that the holy Ghost calles evill good, and that is blasphemous, or else acknowledge many good workes free from sinne.

Answer.

To this we answer: first, they reason from an Epithite or title that the Scripture gives to workes considered in the abstract by themselves as they are commanded, or as we are moved to doe them, and so indeed they are holy and good, but that is no good argument nor prooffe, that good duties done by us, (admit we be true beleevers) are perfectly good as we doe them, and that they are free from the staine of sinne, as they come from us.

Reply.

Againe, because they will say we finde workes called good in *concreto*, considered together with the doers, and as they are done by beleevers, *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good workes, and glorify your father which is in heaven*, Mat. 3. 16. The holy Ghost calling workes done by us, good, it followes they are not infected with sinne for if they be infected (say they) then they cannot be truly called good.

Answer.

Wee answer againe that it is not true they say; that if workes bee infected with sinne, then they cannot be truly called good, for workes inioyned by God, are

are very good in their owne kinde, and good as they come from grace, and the root of faith, and the infection they receive by our corruption, intermeddling in the doing of them, doth not prove that they are not truly good, but that they are not perfectly good, and it makes them come short in the measure of goodnesse and perfection, and for the workes of true beleevers stained with sinne, may be, and are in the Scriptures called good, because they are truly, though not perfectly good: as one saith well, they are called good, not after perfect iustice, but as is agreeable to our humane fragility.

The Last words of this verse containe the effect of fruitfulness in good workes, namely a further measure of illumination and knowledge of God: and by knowledge of God wee are to understand knowledge of things to bee beleeved concerning God, either touching his Essence, attributes, or workes but specially experimentall knowledge of his grace and mercy in Christ unto salvation, for these words have reference to that in the sixth verse, *truly know the grace of God.*

The first thing wee are to observe from them, is from the dependence of them with the words going before, in that the Apostle saith, *being fruitfull in all good workes*, and so encreasing in the knowledge of God, wee are taught, that fruitfulness in good workes, brings forth a further measure of divine and saving knowledge: good life encreaseth saving knowledge of God. Hee that is fruitfull in good workes, feedes upon his owne workes, and by the very iuyce of such fruits his knowledge of the grace of God is nourished and encreased. Indeed many wicked men, whose lives abound with much impiety, and are over-spread with cursed fruits of sinne, have sometimes a great measure of divine knowledge, and by study and paines doe increase it: but the point is this, that divine and saving knowledge is increased by fruitfulness in all good works: and this may further be confirmed by Scripture (saith our Saviour) *Ioh. 7. 17. If any man doe the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God*: hee there proceeds from doing the will of God to the knowledge of his doctrine. *What man is he that seareth the Lord? him will he teach the way that he shall chuse*, *Psal. 25. 15. and verse 14. The secret of the Lord is revealed to them that feare him: and his covenant to give them understanding*: which words must needs be understood of encrease of knowledge, because no man feares the Lord with true filiall feare but he hath some knowledge of his mercy; and this also may be further strengthened by reasons. First, the more we exercise our selves in the feare of the Lord, the more holy we are, and the more holy, the better able are we to discern holy things: as in manuary trades, the more a man of ordinary capacity doth exercise himselfe in his trade, the more cunning and skillfull hee becomes: so the practise of holy duties, doth helpe and strengthen understanding of holy precepts. Secondly, the more holy wee are, the nearer wee come to the nature of God, and to the puriry of his word, and so we are better able to discern things revealed from God in his word.

The use of the point is this, good workes serve not onely to the glory of God, and the good of men but rebound backe to our soules, even to this use also, to a further encrease of saving knowledge. Then let every one that desireth encrease of saving knowledge, learne the right method and order of proceeding. Dost thou desire to encrease and to grow in the knowledge of God? then bee a doer of that thou knowest already, and *thou shalt bee blessed in thy deed*, as *Iames* speaks, *chap. 1. 25.* Thou shalt finde a blessing on thy good worke, to bring forth a further measure of knowledge. Many say, they desire the knowledge of God, and to bee instructed in his wayes: but in the meane while they will not forsake their owne evill waies, and so though they have meanes of instruction, they faile of their purpose. Dost thou come to the hearing of the word, and thinke to bee further built up in saving knowledge,

Interpretation.

Doct. 8.

Fruitfulness in good workes bring forth a further measure of saving knowledge.

Vse

The right way of encreasing in knowledge is to be doers of the thing we doe know

and yet are guilty to thy selfe, that thou art so farre from being fruitfull in good workes, as thou hast not reformed that sinne of thine, whereof thou hast often beene convinced, be it pride, covetousnesse, &c. I dare be bold to tell thee it is not possible. Thou shalt finde that the Lord will punish thy fruitlesse hearing, with dulnesse and hardnesse of heart. A scorner seeketh wisdom and findeth it not, pro: 14. 6. or shee will not be found: for so much doth the holy Ghost imply in that sentence, that the grace of Gods spirit estrangeth it selfe, not onely from such as scorne and deride religion, but from such as professe religion, and live wickedly, from the proud and ungodly. And if God withhold or withdraw his grace, what can follow but heavinesse of mind, hardnesse of heart, and unwardnesse to every good duty.

Doct. 9.
We are to goe on from one measure of saving knowledge to another.

Vse 1.
Motive.

The words themselves doe further offer unto us this point of instruction (being the very matter and substance of them) that wee are to goe on from one measure of saving knowledge to another: wee are to encrease in the knowledge of God. This truth appeares both in generall, that we are to grow in grace: and in speciall, that we are to grow in the knowledge of God: in one and the same sentence, grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ, 2 Pet. 3. 18. the equity and reason of it is laid downe, 1 Cor. 13. 9. *They that know most, know but in part.*

Therefore wee are to labour every day for increase of holy knowledge: and to that purpose let us consider, that if wee have the meanes of knowledge, and doe not encrease in knowledge, it argues that we are soule-sicke, and that there is some secret distemperance in our soules. If a man eate and drinke, and finde not his body thereby nourished and strengthened, hee must needs thinke all is not well within him: so if wee come to the feeding of our soules, both by the Word and Sacraments, and find no increase of grace and saving knowledge, it is more then a presumption that our soules are distempered and much out of order.

Againe, if wee content our selves in our weake and small measure of knowledge, wee are in great danger to bee seduced and drawne into any error: for certainly where wee are weake (be it in understanding, or bee it in affection) there the temptation will come against us at one time or other. If then we would not make it more then probable, even plaine to our selves, that wee have some festred sore, and some lurking disease in the hearts: if wee would not bee corrupted and mis-led by popish inchanters and seducers, and perish together with them, let us labour to increase in knowledge, and holy understanding, that wee may finde the truth, hold the truth, walke in the truth, and live and die in the truth.

Vers. 11.

Vers. 11. Strengthened with all might through his glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with ioyfulness.

THis verse is a continuance of the Apostles answer to the doubt arising from the first words of the former verse, where the Apostle saith, hee prayed for the Colossians that they might walke worthy of the Lord. Some might thereupon demand, How shall we walke worthy of the Lord? his answer was begun in these words, *being fruitfull in all good workes*: and here it is continued, *that we walke worthy of the Lord*, not onely by being fruitfull in good workes, but also by being strengthened with all might. And withall the Apostle layes downe the efficient cause and beginning of that strength, namely, the glorious power of God, together with the use of it in two particulars; namely, in patience, and long suffering (*unto all patience and long-suffering*) and further makes knowne the quality and condition of these two things in the last word (*ioyfulness*) these are the generall parts of this verse.

Come

Come wee to the words of it, and first of these words [*strengthened with all might through his glorious power*] by might is meant inward ability of mind and will, because this might is to be used in patience and long suffering, which are inward graces of the minde and will, and by [*all might*] is meant all kind of inward strength, answerable to the quality or multiplicity of tryals and afflictions [*glorious power*] by power we are to understand the actual power of God, and that is generall, whereby hee effecteth what hee willeth, Psal. 136. 3. *Our God is in heaven, he doth whatsoeuer he will*: but his more speciall power working grace in them that beleeve, Ephes. 1. 19. and this is called his glorious power, by an excellency, that is his power, specially manifesting his glory: hence it is that wee finde his glory and power promiscuously put one for another, as Rom. 6. 4. Ephes. 3. 16. thus then these first words are to bee conceived, strengthened with all kinde of inward ability of minde and will, through the actual power of God, which worketh grace with them that beleeve, to the speciall manifestation of his glory. In the first place wee are to marke the word of this verse [*strengthened*] the Apostle saith not, being strong in the time present, as before, [*being fruitfull*] and encreasing, but in the time past [*strengthened*] whence we may gather this point of instruction.

That strength to beare affliction must not only shew it selfe in time of affliction, but it must be provided aforehand: we must be well appointed and furnished with strength against the time of trouble, which must shew it selfe in bearing of it with patience. The Apostles words are very direct and plaine: he saith we must be strengthened unto patience: and this is further cleared, Ephes. 6. 10. where the Apostle exhorteth to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might: and presently in the next words subioynes, that we must be armed, and at all points provided, and put on the compleat armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the assaults of the devill: and verf. 13. *For this cause* (saith he) *I take unto you the whole armour of God, that yee may be able to resist in the evil day*: that is, either of tentation, or affliction; it is worthy observation to this purpose, that our Saviour saith, *possesse your soules in patience* Luke 21. 19. patience and strength to beare afflictions must be ours, not by usurpation, nor yet by lawfull use and occupation, as a thing borrowed for the present: but by iust title and possession, wee must have it of our owne, we must be provided of it to use when time shall serve.

And the reason and ground of this is, because wee cannot have it at any time when we please. The very light of nature teacheth men to provide things of speciall use aforehand, which they cannot easily come by, when occasion serves to use them.

Now because the word *provide*, is a word of implication, and implies the use of meanes (for provision is made by meanes) some may desire more speciall direction in this case: what meanes may bee used to furnish themselves with strength against the time of trouble and affliction; for the satisfying of their desire, let them know that the meanes are not only generall, as the word, prayer, &c. serving to worke and encrease any grace in them: but there bee two things that particularly serve as speciall meanes to this purpose, to furnish us, and give us possession of strength against the time of trouble and affliction.

The first is a frequent and serious consideration of the manner of tenure, in what sort we hold and enjoy the good things of this life, health, wealth, and such like: that it is conditionall, that we hold them with condition of the crosse, with a limitation of Gods correction: we must often thinke on it, that the promise made that such as feare the Lord shall eate the good things of the land, is with condition of the Lords triall and correction that they shall eate them unlessse it please the Lord otherwise to try and correct them.

Againe, we are often to meditate on the immutability of Gods love, that his

Interpretation.

Doct. 1.

Strength to beare affliction must be provided before affliction come.

Reason.

Meanes to be used to furnish us with strength against time of affliction.

our strength bee onely in our heads, or funke downe and fetled in our hearts or no: as one faith well, Affliction is a very tell-tale, it will look into every corner of us, and draw out from us what is within; it will discover and tell abroad to all that looke upon us what is in our hearts, whether weaknesse or strength: we know it made a difference betweene *Iob* and his wife in this kind, though both of them were happily strong aforehand in their measure of understanding touching the nature, author, and quality of affliction; yet when affliction came it discovered in the one strength, and in the other weaknesse of heart: so it will doe with us, and therefore it behooveth us to labour to bee strengthened with all might, that when tryall of affliction comes, it may not shame us, laying open our weaknesse to all the world. Pray we ever with *David*, *Psal.* 119. 80, that our hearts may be sound, that wee bee not ashamed, sound without balting and dissembling, sound without distrust (the roote of grudging and complaining) that so we may be sound and strong both in minde and heart, unto all patience and comfort in the greatest triall and affliction.

Come wee to the efficient and beginning of strength to beare all afflictions namely the glorious power of God, that is his actuell power: whence first briefly observe wee, that the actuell power of God doth not onely worke upon the will of man, by changing it in the first conversion, which the P apists deny, who say, it is in the power of mans will either to receive or refuse grace offered; cleane contrary to many places of Scripture. I will not stand to reason that poynt with them.

But hence it appeares, that the power of God doth not only worke upon the will in the first conversion, but doth likewise afterward worke strength in them that beleve: and this is to be observed. To this purpose it teacheth us, whence it is that true iustifying faith faileth not: and that hope is said to bee an anchor sure and stedfast, *Heb.* 6. 19. this comes to passe, through the power of Christ; which in his members is a continued power, working strength and ability in them, and never wholly interrupted, it is not any vertue or excellencie in faith it selfe, or in hope it selfe, that makes either of them, of never failing continuance: for both faith and hope are changeable in themselves, and nothing in it selfe is unchangeable but God: but the power of Christ it is ever working in some degree in his members that makes faith not to faile, and hope an anchor sure and stedfast.

Hence it is that the Apostle faith, *1 Pet.* 1. 5. *Wee are kept through faith unto salvation*: but how? not by any strength in faith it selfe, but by the power of God. The words are very pregnant for the prooffe of this, and very emphaticall: we are kept, or as the originall word is (being military) wee are guarded as with a strong garison by the power of God, by which our faith is fenced and fortified against all hostility, so as no enemy of our salvation can breake in upon it, to overcome it: we may bee assured of it, as many as are begotten to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Iesus Christ, that our faith shall stand and never be quelled i the greatest trials, it being supported, strengthened and guarded by the omnipotent actuell power of God.

Wee are further to observe, that the power and strength by which wee stand upright in the time of trouble, and beare with patience any affliction, is not of our selves, but from the power of the Lord; we are strengthened with all might unto all patience, through his glorious power: for why? it is the actuell power of God, that doth both support and strengthen faith, as wee have heard, and also doth worke in them that beleve, a feeling consideration of Gods unchangeable love towards them, and a preparation of heart, willingly to beare any trouble: even they that beleve have not these things of themselves, but from the actuell power of God working in them. Hence it is that the Apostle faith of himselfe, that hee was enabled and provided of strength, to endure any condition

We are to consider that affliction will discover what is in us.

Doct. 3.

The power of God not only workes on the will in the first conversion, but afterward also.

Vse

Hence it is that faith never faileth.

Doct. 4.

Our strength by which wee stand in affliction, is not of our selves, but from the power of God.

tion of life, to be full and to be hungry, to abound and to have want: not by any power of himselfe, but by the helpe of Christ, Philip. 4. 13. And againe we shall finde, that the dearest servants of God, such as haue had great measure of strength to beare afflictions, if the Lord did but a little withdraw his hand from them, their weakenesse hath then appeared: we see it in *Iob* who whilest hee had the power of God, to support and strengthen him, was able in his greatest extremitie, when he was touched (not only in goods, but also in his children) to blesse God, and with wise consideration of the hand that smote him, to reprove and sharply to checke the folly of his wife. Yet wee finde that afterward when the Lord did but a little withdraw his hand, to shew that *Iob* stood not by his owne strength, but by his power, then did *Iob*'s corruption and weakenesse shew it selfe, and cause him to breake out into some unbecoming termes of impatiencie. It is then most cleere, that the strength by which we stand in time of affliction is not of our selues, but from the power of the Lord.

Vse 1.
Confutation
of the Papists.

This serues to discover vnto vs a notable vntuth, and error of the Papists, who teach that we may in this life haue in vs such perfection of inherent righteousness, as is sufficient to defend vs from all formall transgression of Gods law, and all deadly finnes (as they call them.) Besides the error in the ground of this opinion, which is an imagined perfection of righteousness in this life, if it be laid to the doctrine deliuered and prooued, we shall finde they cannot stand together: for (I hope) they will not denie impatiencie to be a formall transgression of Gods law, being a sinne against the first commandement of the first table: and wee haue proued it by warrant of the Apostle, and strength of reason, that the power by which we stand in time of triall, and are kept from impatiencie, is not in our selues, but only from the actuall power of God, therefore not any perfection in vs is sufficient to defend from formall transgression of Gods law. And to say wee haue such perfection of goodnesse in vs, as is able to keepe vs from such transgression, is to make our inherent righteousness stronger then ever was *Adam*, in the time of innocencie: nay, it is to ascribe vnto vs that which is proper to God alone, for he only cannot possibly sinne, by reason of absolute and infinite goodnesse in himselfe: and it is not the strength either of Man or Angell, that keeps him from sinning, but the power of God, and the speciall grace of God upholding him.

Vse 2.
Let us in time
of trouble, be
strong in the
Lord, even in
the power of
his might.

Againe, is the strength by which wee stand in time of triall, not of our owne, but from the Lord? then let every one learne to follow the exhortation of the Apostle in time of triall and affliction, to bee strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, Ephes. 6. 10. Some may say, How is it to bee done? how shall I that am a weake creature, be strong in the Lord? The holy Ghost hath taught thee, that by faith, of weak, thou mayest be made strong, Heb. 11. 34. get thou hold of the glorious working power of God by faith, and thou shalt draw downe strength from him, to beare with comfort the greatest trouble. We reade of *Stephen*, Act. 7. 55. when his persecutors were raging mad against him, that in the midst of their violence, his eye was in heaven, his faith pierced the clouds, and came to the presence of God, and drew downe from thence strength and comfort unto him in the heat of his persecution, when his affliction was at the highest and forest upon him. Thus it will be with us, if wee bee able by our faith to breake through the cloud of our affliction (that in the sense of flesh and blood seemes to separate betweene God and us) and to apprehend the glorious power of God: we shall then finde his actuall power, working strength in us unto all patience.

Motives to
perswade to
the practise of
the former use.
Motive 1.

Let us therefore raise up our hearts to an apprehension of the power of God to strengthen us in time of affliction: and consider wee what comfort is to beleevers in apprehending the power of God, what rest and peace there is in relying upon it. It is worthy observation, that we finde that the Lord saith, Exod. 11. 1.

when

when he lets you goe, he shall at once chase you hence: the Lord was not onely able by his mighty power to give his people passage out of Egypt, but to make Pharaoh (that was so loath to let them goe) as glad to rid them away, as ever before he was desirous to hold them. What assurance then may we have of such end, issue and strength, as he in wisdom shall know best for his children, that by faith depend on him, seeing he is thus able?

Again, let us raise up our hearts to rest by faith on the power of the Lord, to give strength in time of trouble, upon our owne former experience of his power. No doubt there is never a one of us, but either hath or might have found that the Lord hath enabled us in some of our troubles with extraordinary and unexpected strength: and that ought to assure us of his power, to strengthen us in time to come. It is the very end, why the Lord doth manifest his power in our weaknesse, beyond expectation: that we might ever in assured trust depend upon him, and be strong in the power of his might. This was Davids argument of comfort: hee was discouraged and taken up short by Saul, and told that hee was a boy: What faith David? 1 Sam. 17. O King, I have found that God hath heretofore given mee strength above nature, when I was in danger to be devoured of a Lyon, and of a Beare: therefore I doubt not but hee will even now also be to me, as he hath beene. Thus ought wee to raise up our selves upon former experience of the Lords mighty power, that as he hath beene, so he will be powerfull to strengthen us, and so by faith to rest upon him.

Ioyne to him as a third motive to stirre us up (thus to rest by faith, on the power of God, and so to be strong in the Lord) that which wee finde in this very text: that the actuall power of God working grace and strength, it serves much for the manifestation of the glory of God: the Apostle saith, (through his glorious power) therefore we may be assured, if by faith we rest upon the power of the Lord, that the Lord may as well lose his power, or lose his glory, which is a thing impossible, as we faile of strength from him in time of affliction.

Let these things be thought on, that it is comfortable to rest upon the al-sufficient power of God, that our former experience of his power ought to assure us, of continuall supply of strength, if by faith we still depend upon him, and that his power working strength in them that beleeve, tendeth to speciall manifestation of his glory, which ever was, and ever shall be deare unto him: and therefore if wee depend upon him by faith, we cannot faile of strength, in time of trouble and affliction. And let the consideration of these things stirre us up to lift up our hearts to heaven, and by faith to lay hold of the actuall power of God, that in our greatest affliction we may be strong in the Lord.

Come we to the use of strength here prayed for, in two things laid downe in the words following, (unto all patience and long-suffering) and the quality and condition of these two, (joyfulness) By patience we are to understand a quiet subjection of our wils to the will and pleasure of God, in time of any pressure, crosse or affliction, even to the death, without either seeking unlawfull meanes to ease our selves, or breaking out into bitter termes. for that indeed is impatency, when a man is displeased for the worke of God upon him, and for laying his hand on him, and afflicting him, and seekes either to ease himselfe by unlawfull meanes, or doth foolishly charge God that he deales hardly with him, murmuring and complaining against him. The Apostle addes (to all patience;) his meaning is to a quiet subjection of our wils to the will of God in any, yea in the greatest affliction (long-suffering) Patience and long suffering differ not in kinde but in the time. Long suffering is not (as some would have it) a distinct species or kind of subjection of the will to the will of God, in time of affliction, but a continuance of it, because (oftentimes) the same affliction continues long: the word therefore here used is translated, 1 Tim. 5. 7. long patience (joyfulness) that is with joy and comfort of heart.

Motive 3.

Interpretation

We

Doct. 1.

We walke worthy of the Lord to the pleasing of him in all things, not onely by doing good, but also by bearing evil patiently.

Note.

Vse 1.

Affliction is no good argument to prove that the Lord loves not his children.

Vse 2.

It is but one part of our duty to behave our selves well in time of prosperity.

Wee must here call to minde that this verse is a part of the Apostles answer, to a doubt arising from the first words of the former verse, as wee heard before: whence wee may conclude and gather, that we walke worthy of the Lord, to the pleasing of him in all things, not onely by being fruitfull in all good works, and by doing good, but also by bearing evil with patience. And to prove this a little further, know that the will of God revealed in his word (especially in the word of the Gospel) teacheth not onely that good must be done, but that evill likewise must be suffered: it is the generall Aphorisme and sentence of the Gospell, *that all that will live godly in Christ Iesus, must suffer their measure of affliction*: and it teacheth also, how evill must be suffered, namely, with patience. Hence it is called *the word of patience*, Revel. 3. 10. teaching to suffer evill, and how to suffer it: upon which ground it followeth, that then wee walke worthy of the Lord, to the pleasing of him in all things, when wee both doe good commanded, and suffer evill laid upon us, with patience, as wee are taught by the Gospell.

Againe, wee are to consider, that then wee walke worthy of the Lord, when according to the measure of grace given, our life is conformable to the life of Christ: and then only is it so, when we doe good commanded, and suffer evill (laid upon us) with patience: for his obedience was active and passive, a fulfilling of the law in his life, and a suffering with patience the cursed death of the crosse. Thus must our obedience be, we must not onely doe good, but suffer evill with patience, that wee may be conformable to the death of Christ, as the Apostle speakes, Philip. 3. 10.

First, let this serve to beat downe the reasoning of corrupt flesh and bloud, and stop the slanderous mouthes of wicked Atheists, which commonly upon occasion of the affliction of the godly, are open to blaspheme God, and charge him with want of love to his children, because hee doth afflict them. The doctrine delivered makes it plaine, that affliction is no good argument, to proue that the Lord loves not his children, and the Atheist cannot thereupon gather it, that the Lord doth not regard them: for why? patience is an excellent vertue, a speciall part of Christian obedience, whereof there were no use, if they were not afflicted: as there is no use of temperance out of occasion, and meanes of riot and excesse, so there is no use of patience out of afflictions: and besides this use of affliction, which is sufficient to silence backe-byring flesh, charging God with want of love to his Children, it serves further to many other good uses, as to tame unbridled affections, to confirme faith, by speciall experience of Gods mercy, to stirre up obedience, yea, it is as great an argument as can be of Gods love, and of eternall retribution: so the Apostle reasons, 1 Cor. 11. 32. *we are chastened*: and why? because we should not be condemned with the world. Let us not then give place to the reasoning of flesh and bloud in this case.

Againe for the second use, is it so, that our walking worthy of the Lord, standeth not onely in doing good, but in suffering evill with patience? then let every one learne, that it is but one halfe part of our duty, to carry our selves well in time of prosperity, bee it that wee walke without offence, and happily doe much good, it is not enough: we must also learne to obey the will of the Lord, in a patient and quiet subiection of our wils, to his will in time of adversity, that is another principall part of our obedience. It is as well required of us, that we suffer evill with patience, as that we doe good with cheerefulness, and because some, yea such as feare God, and have a speciall measure of grace, and by grace are enabled to doe much good in time of prosperity: yet when affliction comes, they finde themselves defective in this part of obedience, their corruption doth breake out, and shew it selfe in some impatient word or behaviour: let us therefore thinke upon this duty, and withall thinke upon some thing that may helpe and strengthen us in the practise of it.

And

Note.

And first to this purpose, consider we whence our affliction comes, even from the good pleasure and appointment of the Lord. All men for the most part will confesse the world to bee governed by the Lord: but when it comes to their owne particular case in affliction, few doe acknowledge it, then some accuse the uncertainty of the things of this life: some ascribe their affliction to their owne rashnesse and want of heed: others againe have their eyes set upon the wickednesse of enemies that afflict them, accusing and condemning them, which is a fault besides impatency, even to confesse other mens sinnes, and not our owne: we must learne to looke higher, to see and behold Gods hand striking, and acknowledge his good providence in our affliction, and that will make vs if any grace be in us, in patience and silence to submit our selves to the will of the Lord: for why? he is iust in afflicting us, and wise imposing affliction upon us, for many good endes and mercifull: he might iustly destroy us.

Note.

Secondly, consider that by impatency we are cruell to our selves, wee weaken our selves, and make that stronger against us, which doth already torment us: we adde affliction to our selves, in other things wee commonly love our selves too much: but in this we are cruell to our owne bowels, and become instruments of further torment to our selves, and that cruelty is most barbarous, and the greatest cruelty. For any crime a man commits against himselfe, is greater than it can bee against another: as for a man to murder himselfe, is a more feareful degree of murder then to murder one another, and so if a man be cruel to himselfe, it is most savage cruelty. Let us then thinke upon it, that our affliction comes from the hand of God, who is most iust, wise and mercifull in afflicting of us, and that if we suffer our selves to be impatient, we are cruell to our owne bowels, which is the greatest and most savage cruelty. Let the consideration of these things stirre us up to a patient and quiet subiection of our wills to the will and pleasure of the Lord, that so we may walke worthy of the Lord, both in prosperity and adversity.

Doff. 6.

It is further to be marked, that the Apostle saith (*Vnto all patience and long suffering.*) Whence we are taught to be constant in patience, and to beare with patience great and long continued affliction: wee must not beare Christ his yoke for a brunt, but as himselfe hath taught us, take up his crosse daily, and follow him, *Luk. 9. 23.* Constancy is the complement and perfect worke of patience, *Iam. 1. 4.* This point needs no long prooffe, it stands upon the same ground with the former, it is easily proved, but not so soone learned. For happily a man may in silence submit his will to the good will of God, in some one affliction: but when either another is added, or that encreased and continued then it is hard to continue patient: for then besides the rising up and rebelling of his owne flesh, the devill will bee ready to suggest, that none whom God love was ever so dealt withall, and if wee oppose to this suggestion the example of any childe of God, then he will shift his loot, and say, but never was any child of God so grievously afflicted as thou art.

We are to beare with patience, great & long continued affliction.

That we may therefore bee strengthened against this subtilty of Satan, and enabled with patience to beare great and long continued affliction: know that no such measure of affliction doth ever befall us, as hath beene laid on the Saints of God recorded in the Scripture. Take one in stead of many, *Iob 16. 13. 14.* read and marke there affliction, and an exceeding measure of it, compassed round about; his reines cut, not spared, his gall powred upon the ground, broken with one breaking upon another, and runne upon like a Giant: can we say wee have such a measure of affliction? no surely; if wee speake the truth wee cannot, and I further prove it. The Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 10. 13.* *The Lord will measure our affliction according to the ability of his children.* Now our strength when it is at the greatest, is farre inferior to the strength of *Iob*, *David* or *Abraham*: and therefore we must needs confesse our trials and troubles are farre inferior and short

Vse.
We are to labour for strength against Satans subtilty in particular.
Note.

short of theirs: let not then Satan ever prevaile with us, to perswade us, that never any whom God loved was afflicted as we are: let us put backe his suggestion with this reason, and so learne to beare with constant patience the greatest measure, and the most long continued affliction, that the Lord shall lay upon us

Doct. 7.

It is not enough to be patient in great and long continued affliction, unless it be with sweet contentment.

Reasons of the Doctrine.**Use.**

If patience be not with ioy, it is not pleasing to the Lord nor a fruit of grace.

Come we to the last word (ioyfulnesse) this (as we said) is the qualitie and condition of patience and long suffering. Our instruction hence is this, it is not enough to be patient, and silent in great and long continued afflictions, vnlesse it be with sweet contentment, ioy and comfort, we must not only be content to beare the miseries and afflictions of this life, so farre the Heathen could goe vpon consideration of fatall necessity: but wee must goe a step further euen to reioyce in our afflictions: yea, as *S. Iames* saith, 1.2. count it exceeding ioy, when ye fall into diuers tentations.

Reasons of this are given, first by *Peter*, because wee are in affliction conformable to Christ, *Reioyce* (saith he) *in as much as ye are partakers of Christs sufferings*. 1. Pet. 4. 13. Secondly by *S. Paul*. *when we are weakest, we are indeede strongest*, having then speciall fauour, protection, and strength from the Lord therefore saith the Apostle, *I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecution, in anguish for Christ, sake, for when I am weak, then am I strong*. 2. Cor. 12. 10.

Let this be thought on, that patience must be with ioy and comfort. if that be away, it is not pleasing to the Lord. And againe know, that patience with ioy and comfort is a true marke of Gods child, for affliction being sanctified and sent as a testimonie of Gods love towards his Children, if we with patience and comfort endure it, God in it, and by it doth offer himselfe vnto vs, as vnto children, Heb. 12. 7. affliction of its owne nature doth presse downe the heart, hands and eyes, if then faith, patience and comfort can keepe the hart, hands and eyes vpwards, it is a manifest argument that the spirit of grace and strength doth rest vpon vs, making faith to triumph over the triall, and making vs conquerours, yea more than conquerours, Rom. 8. 32. Let this be considered, and sturre vs vp to a cherefull and comfortable bearing of any affliction, though it be great and long continued vpon vs: and so much of this verse.

Verf. 12. *Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light.*

A summary declaration of the doctrine of salvation, from this 12. verse to the 13. The generall preposition. The parts of it

THE Apostle having finished the proeme and entrance of his Epistle, standing on a congratulation and comprecation from the third verse to this twelfth, now he enters vpon a summarie declaration of the doctrine of salvation, from this verse to the 23. the generall proposition laid downe in these verses, is this, that salvation comes vnto vs from God the Father, by his sonne Iesus Christ, true God and man, and the head of his Church, whose merit is sufficient to all perfection of eternall life. The parts of this proposition are two. First, a declaration of the fountaine, and first Author of salvation, namely God the Father, together with the effect wrought by him, in verf. 12. 12.

2 Secondly, a manifestation of the workes of Iesus Christ, and the worke wrought by him, namely redemption, verf. 14. to which is sub-ioyned in the verses following, a conformation and prooffe of his sufficiencie to redeeme vs and that is proved both by the dignitie of his person, that he was true God, the image of the invisible God, the first borne of everie creature, and by the eternall decree and good pleasure of his Father, together with the application both in generall, and in speciall to the Colossians.

The words of the 12. and 13. verses, being the first part of the generall proposition containe in them two things: first, the effect wrought by God the Father

ther, verf. 12. Secondly, the manner how it was wrought, verf. 13.

In the twelfth verfe we finde more specially a thanksgiving to God, *giving thanks unto the Father*: and the reason and ground of that in thofe words, *which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints*; and the place of that inheritance in the laft words, *in light*. First briefly examine we the words of the twelfth verfe: the word *Father*, is here to be taken perfonally for the firft perfon in the Trinity, becaufe one perfon is conferr'd with another, and it standeth in relation to Chrift (*meet*) that is, fit, fufficient, fo the word is rendered, 2 Cor. 2. 16. and it is fo heere translated by the Papifts themfelves: yet heere they translate it *worthy*, labouring thereby to uphold their opinion of inherent worthineffe and condignity deferving falvation, which indeed cannot ftand either with the proper fignification of the word, or with the context, and with that in the verf. following: where it is fhewed how we are made fit, namely, by effectual vocation, juftification, and a meafure of fanctification. *To be partakers*, or to a part, *inheritance of the Saints*, that is to fay, life and glory, given (as it were, by lot, (for the Apoftle alludeth to the divifion of the land of Canaan) to them that are fanctified by faith (*in light*) that is to fay, in the glorious kingdome of heaven: for fo wee finde the word *light*, taken, Aft. 26. 23. and fhould fhew light, or preach light, that is to fay, life eternall. Now come we to fuch things as may be obferved from this verfe.

First, we are to marke that the Apoftle entring upon the doctrine of falvation, and the confideration of the grace of God in the worke of redemption, hee begins with thanksgiving to God. Our leffon hence is this, when wee either thinke or fpeake of the grace of God in the worke of our redemption: then our hearts muft bee enlarged, and our murtheres opened to magnifie the name of the Lord, for that is the end of all the mercies of God beftowed upon us. It is the end of all the actions of God tending to falvation, 1. Pet. 2. 9. yea of the chiefest of them, even our glorification in heaven. The point of thanksgiving was handled before in the third verfe: and therefore in a word know we, that as many as have any comfortable feeling of Gods grace in the worke of redemption are thus affected, they never thinke or fpeake of it but with thanksgiving, and it is a fure note and marke that we find true comfort in the doctrine of grace, if when we thinke or fpeake of it, our hearts be filled with joy, and our mouthes opened to praife the Lord: for this being an exercife of the blifled Angels and Saints of God in heaven, who doe continually fing, *thou art worthy to take the booke, and to open the feales thereof, becaufe thou wast killed, and haft redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue, Revel. 5. 9.* It cannot chufe but in fome meafure be begun in this life, and be found in them who fhall hereafter be glorified in heaven.

I come to the matter of the Apoftles thanksgiving (*which hath made us meet*) comprehending under that generall (of making meete) as one fpeciall branch of it, the iuftification of a finner: wee may conclude, that whom it pleafeth the Father to iuftifie by his grace in Chrift, to him hee doth truly and really impute the righteousneffe of Chrift, and by his righteousneffe make him truly and really meet and fit to bee partaker of glory in heaven: it is not an imaginary or a fupposed imputation of Chrift his righteousneffe, by which wee ftand iuft and righteous in the fight of God: the Papifts doe fcornfully terme it putative iuftice, and tell us that wee are to tremble at that which followes upon it: that as we have no righteousneffe nor merit of heaven, but as they call it) by a fupposed imputation; fo muft we looke for no heaven, but by imputation: wee are from hence to take notice of it, that it is not (as they falſly cavill) a fupposed, but a reall imputation of righteousneffe, whereby wee ftand iuft in Gods fight: wee are not in conceit made meet for the kingdome of heaven, but truly and really; and to this agreeth that of the Apoftle, that

H

Interpretation.

Doct. 1.

When we either thinke or fpeake of Gods grace in the worke of our redemption, we are to magnifie the name of the Lord.

Uſe.

Such as comfortably feele Gods grace in the worke of redemption are fo affected.

Doct. 2.

God the Father doth truly and really impute the righteousneffe of Chrift to them whom hee doth iuftifie by his grace in Chrift.

Uſe.

Confutation of the Papifts.

we are made the righteousness of God in Christ, 2 Cor. 5. 21. that as our sinne was truly and really, not in conceit; but indeed truly imputed unto him, and hee made sinne for us: so are we made the righteousness of God in him. It is but a fond cavill to shift off the plaine evidence of that place, in that they say: Christ was made sinne, that is to say, a sacrifice for sinne: thereby thinking to elude the people of God, and to perswade that we misconster the place: for we confesse it, that he was a sacrifice for sinne, but he was therefore a sacrifice for sinne, because our sinne was imputed unto him, and punished in him; and therefore it is said that he was made a curse for us, Galath. 3. 13. because the curse we had deserved was imputed unto him, that the blessing of *Abraham* might come upon us, through Christ Jesus.

Vse

Let us not then be driven from this truth by any cavill or scorne of the Papists, but learne to hold it as a certaine truth, that it is a true reall imputation of righteousness, by which we stand just in Gods sight: and this is further cleere by our reall union with Christ by the blood of his spirit: for by the spirit and faith we are really members of Christ his mysticall body, and so his righteousness and merits are truly and really communicated unto us, and we have interest in them as the members of his body.

Doct. 3.

Such as come to be partakers of Christs glory in heaven are made fit for it in this life.

The second point that may be gathered for our instruction is this, that none ever come to be partakers of life and glory in heaven, but such as are before made meet and fit for it, not onely by a reall imputation of righteousness, but by a measure of inherent holiness and sanctification. And to prove this further, we are to know, that howsoever it be true, that no goodness or holiness in us is proportionable in merit and desert to the least degree of glory that shall bee revealed (because our best holiness is imperfect, and life and glory is not given for the worthiness of it:) yet this is as true againe, that life and glory shall bee given in mercy according to the measure of holiness: and where there is a greater measure of holiness, there shall bee a greater degree of glory, and consequently, where there is no holiness, no glory, nor the least degree of glory can be looked for. The Apostle having delivered it in the generall, Rom. 2. 6. that the Lord will reward every man according to his works, he presently subjoynes a particular explication, that unto all them that continue in well doing, the Lord will give glory, honour, and immortality, and eternall life: but on the contrary, such as are contentious and disobey the truth, and obey unrighteousness, they can looke for no such reward from the Lord: upon them shall bee indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, and upon the soule of every one that doth evill. We may observe, that though the kingdome of heaven bee prepared for them that are blessed of God the Father, Mat. 25. 34. yet they are not sent into the possession of it, by the sentence of our Saviour, before he makes it knowne, both to themselves and to all the world, that they are fitted for it, in a measure of sanctification: and that they have testified the same by their works of mercy towards his members: that they fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the sicke, &c. whence it is most cleere, that none ever come to bee partakers of life and glory in heaven, but such as are before made fit for it by a measure of holiness. It will be said,

Object.

Objection. By this doctrine you shut out infants (dying in infancie) from the participation of life and glory in heaven, because they cannot bee so fitted.

Answer.

Answer. The doctrine must not be extended to them, but understood of such as bee of discretion: for infants within the Covenant, and in Gods everlasting Election, dying in their Infancy, are saved, not by actuall faith, which they cannot have, wanting actuall knowledge: but by some other speciall worke of Gods Spirit, not knowne to us, and so not any actuall sanctification is required of them.

Is

Is it so, that where no holinesse is, there can be no expectation of life and glory in heaven, no comfortable sight of God hoped for, Heb. 12. 14. then let no ungodly prophane man or woman, such as *declare their finnes as Sodome*, Isa. 3. 9. sooth and flatter themselves, and thinke they shall goe to heaven well enough for all their abominable filthinesse, (if they so thinke) they are much deceived: and let them heare it from the mouth of the Lord, as a terrible sentence to all unrepentant sinners, that no uncleane thing, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or lies, shall enter therein, but they which are written in the Lambs booke of life, Revel. 21. 27. It is therefore the exhortation of the Apostle, Eph. 5. 6. Let no man deceive you with vaine words, and I may say, Let no man deceive himselfe with such vaine words or perswasion: *This ye know* (saith the Apostle, verl. 5.) *that no whoremonger, neither uncleane person, nor covetous person, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdome of Chrift, and of God: but because many please themselves in their filthinesse and finnes, in hope hereafter to finde mercy, though they have heard, that late repentance is seldome true repentance, and they may happily seeke it and not finde it: I would entreat them that we may a little further reason together upon the doctrine now delivered. They have heard it proved, that none can come to be partakers of life and glory in heaven, but such as are before made fit and meet for it: and can they think that they are fit for heaven, who without remorse of conscience doe againe crucifie Chrift, and make his wounds to bleed a fresh? Thus doe all hard hearted and unrepentant sinners by their finnes: if therefore they rightly consider it, they must of force confesse, that they foolishly perswade themselves they shall get to heaven. Oh, but Gods mercy is great? It is true, hee is a God of infinite mercy, but yet a just God: and it is strange that wicked prophane wretches should dare to presume of Gods mercy under many finnes, and yet they may finde that God hath shewed his justice to the dearest of his children: To *Moses*, to *Aaron*, to *David*, and others, for committing some one sinne: yea, which is more, Chrift himselfe (the glory and Image of his Father) could not escape the bitter death of the Crosse, because he became sinne for us. How then can bold and presumptuous sinners perswade themselves they shall escape the punishing hand of God, they adding sinne to sinne, and wallowing in their finnes till death, without repentance? Let them duly consider this, and for conclusion of this point, let us know, that there is no comfort to be had in our hearts, touching life and glory in the world to come; but onely by a true espiall of sanctification of life in our selves: and let it move us to labour by all appointed good meanes, to come to a measure of sanctification, that we may glorifie our heavenly Father in this life, and may seal up assurance of our happy estate in his glorious kingdome in heaven, to be partaker, or to a part.*

Hence a question is occasioned: some may say, shall wee have distinct parts of glory in heaven, because the Apostle saith, *made meet to a part*? it may seeme some shall have one part of glory, and some another.

No, the very word used by the Apostle is against it, it being a word of the singular number, cannot imply multiplicity of parts: but for full answer, know that all the Saints shall have the same happinesse and glory in substance, namely, perfect union and conjunction with God, and participation of all eternall good thing from him, but all shall not have the same degree of glory, but some greater, some lesse, answerable to the degrees of goodnesse in them.

The Prophet, Dan. 12. 3. doth inferre upon the generall resurrection, that *they that be wise, shall shine as the brightnesse of the firmament, and they that turne many to righteousness, shall shine as the starrs for ever and ever.* And the Apostle plainly teacheth this point, 1 Cor. 15. 41. *There is one glory of the Sunne, and another glory of the Moone, and another glory of the starrs, for one starre differeth*

Use.

Ungodly and prophane persons, in vaine looke to come to heaven, continuing in their finnes.

Question.

Answer.

Use of the answer to the question.

Doct. 4.

Life and glory in heaven is given to Gods Elect freely.

differeth from another Starre in glory. And howsoever that in the parable, Matth. 20. 12. that all the labourers in the vineyard receive every one a penny, may seeme contrary to this : yet wee must understand it, as lying under this distinction, that in respect of essentiall glory, all the Elect shall have the same ; but in regard of accidentall glory, and the degrees of glory, therein they shall not be equall : and let not this be a point of speculation, onely serving to make us able to talke of it : if we rest in that, the very devill shall reape as much profit by it as we.

But let us labour to make it comfortable to our selves ; let it bee laid as a ground in our hearts of comfort, and of godly emulation, even to make us strive to excell one another in holinesse, that so we may finde strong consolation and comfort of conscience in this life, and encrease of glory in the life to come. [*Inheritance*] In that the Apostle calls life and glory in heaven, an *inheritance*, it is most cleare, to any that will rightly consider it, that it is given to Gods Elect, whom it pleaseth the Father to make meet for it, not upon any desert of theirs, but freely : for why ? we know that an inheritance is given to the childe, of the meere love of the father : it may be it was provided for him before he was borne, and before he could doe any thing for the deserving of it : and thus our Saviour speaks of the heavenly inheritance, Matth. 25. 34. *Inherit you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world.* It is a thing commonly knowne, that amongst men, an inheritance is not given to the servant, who peradventure hath done something, either in the getting or keeping of it : but it is given to the childe, who happily is farre from doing any thing, either to the getting or keeping of it, as yet he lies crying in the cradle : so that by this word [*inheritance*] the holy Ghost would have us to understand, that life and glory in heaven is freely given, and not upon desert. Again if the word be taken in the other signification, it doth demonstrate and prove the same thing that life and glory is freely given : for shall we say, that a man doth purchase by merit, that which comes unto him by lot : that were not onely to goe against the common received opinion (that lot stands upon meere chance) but to give the lie to the plaine text, Prov. 16. 33. *The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposition thereof is of the Lord :* so life and glory being called a lot, it doth plainly evince, that it is at the free disposition of the Lord, and given of his free grace : and the reason is given by the Apostle, *by grace we are saved, lest any man should boast himselfe,* Ephes. 2. 9. lest any should glory, that hee brings any thing to the procurement of his owne salvation : therefore it is that we obaine life and salvation freely : and with this agrees that, Rom. 3. 27. where the Apostle having proved that wee are justified freely, hee saith, *Where is then the rejoicing ?*

Vse. 1.
Confutation
of the Papists.

Objection.
Answer.

Note.

First, this serves to confute and overthrow that opinion of the Papists, who hold & teach, that life eternall is given to them that are first justified by Christ, upon their desert for the merit of their owne good works, and as wages due to them by debt. Beside the error of this opinion, (supposing a twofold justification in the sight of God, which can never be proved by the word) it cannot stand with the truth now delivered : for if eternall life be freely given of grace, then not upon desert for the dignity of good works : free gift, and due debt, cannot stand together. Oh, but (say they) life eternall is called a reward : it is true, but we must learne to distinguish with the Apostle, Rom. 4. 4. reward or wages is twofold : of favour and of debt : life eternall is a reward of favour, not of debt, it is given of the meere grace of God, without any desert of ours : we are to observe it, it is worthy observation, that wheresoever in any place of Scripture mention is made of reward, we shall finde that it is promised to the worker, and not to the worke it selfe, as Matth. 6. 4, 6. *shall reward thee openly :* whereby the holy Ghost would have us to understand that though reward bee given

given in respect of the work, yet it is not given for the worth and dignity of it : but it is given for Gods gracious acceptance of the person, and consequently of his worke in Jesus Christ : it is given of favour, not of debt, as deserved by the good worke done by any beleever.

But the Papists further reply, that Christ hath merited, that the works of his members should be meritorious of life everlasting, a meer device of their owne : this proposition is no where to be found in the Scripture : wee finde in many places, that Christ died for our sinnes, but no where for our good works, to make them able to merit, and to purchase favour at Gods hands : and indeed it is not possible that our best works (being imperfect and stained with sinne) should have the true and whole nature of merit : it is a manifest contradiction, that any worke should have need of pardon from God (as all ours have) and yet fully satisfie the justice of God, and deserve at his hands. Yea more than that, if Christ his obedience had been imperfect, and any way defective, though he were God and man, yet it had not bene meritorious of life and salvation, for that were to make contradictories true together, which all Divines, yea school-divines (from whom the Papists fetch the body of their Divinity) hold impossible to God himselfe, because it is an argument of impotence, not of power.

Againe for the second use : is eternall life given as an inheritance freely ? surely then, though we cannot deserve the least degree of it, yet it is the pleasure of God our Father, that we should labour to expresse our thankfulness by all holy obedience unto him, for it holds by proportion : if we are to be thankfull to God for the bread we have to put into our mouths, and for other temporall blessings, as it is our duty, because they are the free gifts of God, and the use and comfort wee finde by them, comes from the Lord : then much more are wee bound to be thankfull unto him, for making us his owne children, we that are not sonnes by nature, making us his children by adoption, yea, sons and heires, even joynt-heires with Christ his naturall Sonne, Rom. 8. 17. and by him, giving us sufficient and certaine title to an everlasting inheritance in his owne kingdom. This is to be thought on : and because every one will be ready to speake peace to his owne heart in this case, and perswade himselfe that he is thankfull to God for his grace of adoption : let us learne to examine our selues whether we be so or no.

How is that to be done ? (may some say.)

Even by our thankfulness to God for his gifts of a lower nature, for things of lesse weight, than is the kingdom of heaven, even for the good things of this life, if we find that we are truly thankfull for them, and moved by them to walke humbly before the Lord, and the more the Lord doth open his hand in blessing us in these things, the more our hearts are enlarged in duty and thankfulness towards him : then we may conclude, that we (in some measure) are thankfull for the grace of adoption : for where the Spirit worketh in us, as in David, 2 Sam. 2. 18. upon the consideration of Gods favour in outward things, to say, who am I, O Lord God, and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto ? the same spirit will be powerfull in us, upon consideration of our title by grace, to the inheritance of the Saints in heaven, to say, Lord who am I that thou shouldest thinke on me, chuse me, and make me thy childe, and heire of heaven : on the contrary, if wee be not thankfull to God for the good things of this life, but after the manner of the wicked, the more the Lord doth increase and multiply his gifts, the more we increase in pride and vanity, in scorne, contempt, and disdain of others : let us then say and pretend what we will, we shall never be able to prove it, and to make it good, to the comfort of our owne soules, that we are thankfull to God, for our title to his free gift of life and glory in heaven.

Use 2.

Wee are to expresse our thankfulness to God, for his free gift of life eternall.

Quest.

Answer.

Doct. 5.

Such as looke for life & glory in heaven, must be of the number of Saints.

Vse
Reprooe of
those who wil-
fully neglect
the use of the
Word and Sa-
craments.

Doct. 6.
Heaven is set
out under the
name of light,
to shadow out
the comfort
there to bee
found.

Vse
We are there-
fore to have a
longing desire
of heaven, and
to use all good
meanes to at-
taine it.

Verf. 13.

Interpret.

[*Saints*] This word pointeth out the same thing that was before delivered, that such as looke to come to be partakers of life and glory in heaven, must in some measure be sanctified, they must be of the number of Saints.

For further use of it, let such persons as doe many times wilfully absent themselves from the hearing of the Word, and participation of the Sacraments at times appointed, thinke upon this one point. Shall none come to be partakers of life and glory in heaven, who are not of the number of Saints? How then can they looke for it, who wittingly and willingly breake off holy Communion and fellowship with the Saints, and doe openly divide and separate themselves from the society of them that shall be glorified in heaven? Know it for truth, thou must either hold communion with thy brethren in this life, in good things, or else never looke to have communion with them in the life to come. If thou doe excommunicate thy selfe (so I may justly speake) and by a wicked and wayward separation divide thy selfe from the society of the Saints upon earth, certainly (without repentance) thou shalt for ever bee excommunicate, and shut out of heaven.

[*In light*] That is to say (as ye heard) in heaven: now heaven is set out under the name of light, to shadow out the excellent comfort that is there to bee found; for we know how comfortable a thing light is. As hell is resembled to utter darknesse, to reach us the horror of it. The use of this, as of other resemblances, setting out the joy, comfort, and glory of heaven, is to worke in us Saint Pauls affection, Phil. 1. 20. a longing desire of heaven, and a labouring by all good meanes to attaine unto it: and to this end let us a little meditate upon this one similitude. As many as are the children of God, doe know, that there is no such comfort to bee found in any thing under heaven, as in the light of the Lords countenance shining upon them: David preferred it before wheat and wine, Psal. 4. 6. Now in heaven, that light of the Lords countenance, shall bee the light that shall shine upon us in full brightness, the glory of God doth light the heavenly Jerusalem, Rev. 21. 23. how then ought this to affect us, and to stir us up in a longing desire after it, even earnestly to strive to come to walke in that unspeakable brightnesse of the glory of God, the glory and light of the Lambe Jesus Christ, a light that never shall be obscured with any darknesse.

Verf. 13: Who hath delivered us from the power of darknesse, and hath translated us unto the kingdom of his deare Sonne.

THe Apostle shewes in this verse, how God makes his Elect meet to bee partakers of life and glory in heaven; namely, by delivering them from the power of darknesse, and translating them into the kingdom of his deare Son: under which termes of (delivering and of translating) are signified their effectuall vocation, justification, and sanctification, through the effectuall working of his spirit, by the Word of the Gospell, for these are the degrees of Gods love, manifested in time to his chosen: and in these very termes doth the holy Ghost speake of the vocation of the Gentiles, Act. 26. 18. Where Saint Paul saith, hee was sent as an instrument (by the preaching of the Gospell) to convert and call the Gentiles: and propounds the end of his sending, in these very words, to open their eyes, &c.

Come we to speake of the first of these [*who hath delivered us from the power of darknesse*] the word translated *delivered*, doth signifie such a deliverance, as (in respect of them that are delivered) is neither deserved by them, nor desired of them, but is (as it were) a drawing and a haling, as is the pulling of a beast, or rather a dead wight out of a pit; and in respect of the deliverer, it signifieth such a deliverance, as is wrought by his Almighty power, by the power of his spirit. And by the power of darknesse, we are to understand the rule and dominion

Use. 1.

No man ought to thinke that hee can at his owne time and pleasure be delivered from the bondage of sinne and Satan.

Doct. 3.

When men by the worke of grace are drawne out of the state of corruption, they are delivered not altogether from the power of sinne.

Reason.

Use.

For triall of our selves touching our deliverance from our naturall state.

Question.

Answer.

Three things.

1

2

3

same God (by the power of his spirit) doth deliver the minde from darkness and ignorance, the will from rebellion, the affections from disorder, and all the powers of the soule from corruption. Let no man then please himselfe with a conceit, that he can at his owne time and pleasure be delivered from the bondage of sinne and Satan, that is, to suffer our thoughts to rise up in contradiction onto the holy Ghost, and in our hearts to gain-say the truth, breathed out of the mouth of God himselfe, in this and many other places. Let no man then please himselfe, in such a conceit so contrary to the plaine truth plainly taught by our Saviour, and so neglect the timely using of the meanes, as hearing and reading the word of God, and other meanes by which God doth worke the calling and conversion of his elect, and their deliverance from the bondage of sinne and Satan.

We are further to marke, that the Apostle saith not, from sinne and Satan, but from the power of darkness, from the power of Satan ruling by sinne; our instruction hence is this, that when it pleaseth God (by the powerfull worke of his grace, to draw men out of the state of corruption, he doth not deliver them altogether from sinne, but from the power of sinne, so as after their deliverance, sinne doth not rule and raigne over them; and in them, according to the exhortation of the Apostle, Rom. 6. 12. *Let not sinne raigne in your mortall bodies.* The reason of it is this, the Lord will have us here (so long as we live in this world) to bee in continuall exercise of faith and repentance, and spirituall grace and strength: therefore he doth not deliver those whom it pleaseth him to call and convert altogether from sinne, but from the power of sinne, that sinne doth not rule and raigne in them, and this may serve as a speciall note and marke that cannot deceive us. Whereby we may know when we are delivered from our naturall state and condition, namely, when we are freed from the rule and dominion of sinne, that though we sometimes fall into sinne, yet we are not in bondage unto it. And this may also serve to teach us when we are delivered from some particular sinne, wherof wee are most guilty, even then when wee finde the power of it broken.

But haply some will demand, how shall wee know that wee are delivered from the power of some particular sinne? for herein some deceive themselves, and falsely thinke they are delivered, when they are not: as the uncleane adulterous person, enfeebled by sickness or age, the prodigall riotous person drawne dry in his purse, their minds still running after their sinne as much as ever before, they thinke they are delivered from their particular sin. These indeed are delivered from the practise of sinne, but not from the power of their sinne.

Then we are delivered from the power of some particular sinne, when wee being able to commit it, occasion being offered, and we being tempted unto it, doe either with a loathing of it because it is a sinne, or not for feare, or shame of the world refraine from it; and if we fall into it, our fall is with reluctation and griefe, as *Paul* saith of himselfe, Rom. 7. 15. the evil hee hated he did, and after the fall we recover our selves by speedy repentance: for where the seed of grace hath taken root, these three things are to be found; a purpose not to sinne; and if we be overtaken with sinne, little or no pleasure in the act of sinne; and bitter griefe of heart, after wee are fallen: as wee reade of *David*, 2 Sam. 24. 10. when he had numbred his people, his heart smote him. Againe, when wee are not able to commit sinne for want of meanes and strength, wee may know that we are delivered from the power of it, if so be wee looke not backe to it with pleasure, if we neither thinke nor speake of it but with bitter griefe: for surely such as thinke or speake of their old familiar sinne, which now they are not able to practise with delight, they are not delivered from the power of it: they are like *Lot's* wife, who though her body was delivered out of *Sodome*, yet her heart was still there, and therefore she cast a long looke backe

to that filthy sinke of sin : and they are to remember *Leas* wife. It is the exhortation of our Saviour, that as she was smitten by the hand of God, and turned into a pillar of salt, so they first or last (without repentance) shall be smitten and made spectacles of the wrath.

Now to the second generall thing, in this verse, in these words [*and hath translated*]: the word [*translated*] is here taken from the Latine, and signifieth through the effectually working of the spirit of God, working by the word of the Gospell, carried and set over; [*kingdome of his Sonne*] that is to say, into the kingdome of Christ his naturall sonne, his son by eternall generation, in respect of his Deity, and in respect of his Humanity by personall union: and by the word [*kingdome*] we are to understand the regiment and government of Christ, as mediatur in his Church: and because Christ his regiment is twofold, of grace and of glory, we must know that there is meant this kingdome of grace, whereby he doth order and rule his Church, and the members of it in this life, which (in respect of the manner of government) shall have an end at the second coming of Christ to judgement, 1 Cor. 15. 24. For though Christ his kingdome in it selfe be eternall, because he is God, equall to the Father, and the head of his Church; yet the manner of the administration of his kingdome, by preaching, Sacraments, and discipline, shall have an end, he shall then cease to doe the office of a Mediatur (but that by the way) (*his deare sonne*) that is to say, the sonne of his love: so the words are in the originall his sonne, *in whom* (as wee have it, Matth. 3. 17. *he is well pleased*). Thus then these words are to bee conceived, and through the powerfull worke of his spirit, working by his word, hath brought and set us under the regiment and government of grace, whereby Christ his naturall sonne, and the sonne of his love, doth governe his Church in this life.

Now the first thing wee have here to marke, is from the connexion of the parts of this verse. The Apostle saith, *Hee hath delivered us from the power of darknesse, and hath translated us into the kingdome of his deare sonne*. Hence wee may take up this instruction, that God doth not onely deliver his Elect from the power of sinne, but doth also set them in the state of grace: and he doth not onely draw them out of the state of their corruption, but he brings them under grace, and works grace in them. for as the Apostle saith, whom hee hath appointed to life and salvation, them hee calleth, Rom. 8. 30. Now effectually calling (which must needs there bee understood) being applied to Gods elect, is when grace is not onely offered by the ministry of the Word, but given through the effectually working of Gods spirit in the heart, he changing the heart, and giving it power to receive the Word, and to mix it with faith, and to bring forth fruit of new obedience: for that is effectually calling, and that doth plainly prove, that God doth not onely deliver his elect from the power of sin, but he brings them under grace, and works grace in them. Wee need seeke no further for the prooffe of this, then the word here used [*translated*] for translation is a setting of us out of one state into another.

The reason of this is, because God will have the minde, will, and affections of his chosen not onely free from evill, as a field purged of thistles and weeds, but hee will have them active, working and fruitfull in goodnesse: for then they are sanctified, when they are transformed from the image of Satan, into the image of God. And thus they are truly renewed when they are turned from sinne to God, and bring forth fruits of new obedience.

Let the consideration of this point for the use of it teach us to know when we are effectually called, & truly converted, namely, then when by the powerfull works of Gods spirit, our minds, wills, and affections, are not onely freed from corruption, but grace is wrought in them: and to descend a little lower

Interpretation.

Note.

Doct. 4.
God doth not onely deliver his elect from the power of sinne, but sets them also into the state of grace.

Reason.

Use.
How to know when wee are effectually called.

in the application of this point : then we are effectually called out of some sin, and truly turned from some sinne : when we are not onely kept from that sinne, but with love, liking, alacrity and cheerfulness, we practise the contrary duty, that is a rule that cannot deceive us. Many please themselves, and thinke they are in good case, called home, and reclaimed from some sinne, when they avoid that sinne, but we must know, that it is not sufficient. The Apostle doth tell us, 2 Pet. 2. 20. *that some may escape from the filthinesse of the world through the knowledge of the Lord, and the Saviour Iesus Christ, and yet bee tangled againe therein and overcome, and the latter end bee worse with them than the beginning.* As many as will be sure they are effectually called home, (so as they cannot goe backe againe to their old course) must not onely finde themselves delivered from their sinne, but must also finde the contrary grace wrought in them, yea in some cases the contrary speciall grace : as for example, such as will bee sure they are called out of their naturall blindness and ignorance of God : of themselves and of the way to life and salvation, must not onely finde their minds enlightened by a generall illumination, a bare conceiving and understanding of the sense and meaning of the word (that is a common grace, and that may bee common to them with the Devill, and the wicked) but they must finde in them a speciall experimentall knowledge, a particular acknowledgement and perswasion of the truth of the whole Word of God : a believing holy knowledge which is never disjoyned from good affection, and then they may be sure they are effectually called out of their ignorance : and thus it is in other particulars ; let no man then imagine that he is effectually called home, when for a time hee hath escaped the practise of some sinne, unlesse he can withall shew the practise of the contrary vertue. And to this purpose consider we but this one thing, that it is not possible for a man long to continue in that barren, and as (I may call it) gracelesse estate, in which he doth please himselfe, if the sinne be avoided, and the contrary vertue not practised, it cannot be but that he will returne with the dogge to his vomit. For marke what our Saviour hath left upon perpetuall record, Matth. 12. 24. *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, if he returne (as he will seeke to returne) and finde the house empty, or as the word is, idle, not possessed by grace : certainly, hee will enter and hold possession with greater strength than before, and the latter end of that man will bee worse than his beginning.*

Doct. 5.
Gods Elect being delivered from sinne, and set into the state of grace, are still under government.

In the next place we are to marke, the Apostle saith, *translated into the Kingdome*, that word (*Kingdome*) being a word of relation, having reference to subjects : it teacheth that Gods Elect delivered from sinne, and set into the state of grace are still under government, they are not at liberty to live as they list : for why ? the Kingdome of grace, as the Apostle reasoneth, gives no licence to sinne, that they that are under grace, should therefore sinne : we are not under the Law, but under grace : What then ? doth it follow that wee should sine, God forbid, saith the Apostle, Rom. 6. 15. Hee speaks it with a detestation of that conclusion, as if he should have said, Fie upon it, farre be it from us. The Scripture is pregnant in the prooffe of this : but for more speciall information in this point, wee must know what be the lawes, under which Gods Elect live in this Kingdome of grace, and they are two : first, the word of God, the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles. Hence is the Gospell called the Gospell of the Kingdome, Mark. 1. 14. The Law of faith, Rom. 3. 27. The second Law, is the power and operation of the Spirit of God, in the hearts of his children. The Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 4. 20. *The Kingdome of God is not in word, but in power.* And Jer. 31. 33. saith the Lord, *I will put my Law into their inward parts, and write it in their heart, and will be their God, and they shall be my people.* These being the Lawes of the Kingdome of Christ in this life : all Gods Elect set into the state of grace are to be subject unto them, and to finde them powerfully to worke

worke in them obedience. They doe not onely teach us, under what manner of government we live, but do plainly prove that we are not at liberty, to live as we list, but still under government. For to that end is a law given, (especially the law binding the conscience as these doe) that it should bee obeyed, and to retaine men within the compasse of durie. Hence the lawes of men are truly called the finewes and bands of the common-wealch.

But some may say, the Apostle hath taught us, Gal. 5. 1. that we are set at liberty by Christ: stand fast therefore in the liberty, wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled againe with the yoke of bondage.

The answer is easie. By Christ as many as are in him have liberty indeed, but it is spirituall, not a carnall liberty: they have freedome from the curse of the Law, and from the rigour of the Law, requiring exact and perfect obedience, and from the tyrannie and dominion of sinne. But they have no liberty to sinne, and to live as they list, that (as the Apostle saith in the same chap. ver. 13.) is to use their liberty, as an occasion unto the flesh. This then remaines a truth, that Gods Elect delivered from the power of sinne, and set in the state of grace, are still under government.

And for the use of this, let every one hence learne to reason back againe, that if he be not subject to the Lawes of Christ his Kingdome, and ruled in some measure by his Word and Spirit: then he is not delivered from the power of sinne, nor in the state of grace. And a little further to presse this: can wee persuade our selves we are in the state of grace, and under grace, and yet abuse grace, make it an occasion to all licentious liberty to sinne, make it as a bawd to our lying, swearing, drunkenness, &c? If we doe but weigh this in the ballance of naturall reason, it will be found too light to this purpose: for as we use to say, when a man doth sell a thing of great worth for a small price, and after that, gives himselfe to rioting and mis-spending of that money: he is a theife, and no right owner of that he sold. The like may bee justly said of such as abuse grace, that they are but usurpers, and no right owners of it, and that they have no true lawfull title unto it. Let this bee thought on, and withall, remember what we daily call for, or ought to call for at the hands of God; namely this, that this Kingdome may be set up and established in the Church, and in our own hearts. And if we doe not withall labour to submit our selves to the Stepter of his Kingdome, the rule of his word and spirit, but wilfully reject his yoke: wee pray against our selves, wee desire the Lord to take us away, to confound and destroy us by his judgements, that his Kingdome may encrease, and out of our owne mouthes will the Lord judge us, and in his just conceived anger accomplish that we aske. Therefore with trembling hearts let us consider, and in time submit our selves to the Kingdome of Christ. Before I leave this word (*Kingdome*) I will briefly answer a cavill of the *Anabaptists*, who upon this, and the like places of Scripture, take occasion to maintaine a confused *Anarchy*, and to reason against civill government amongst Christians, after this manner. Gods elect (say they) effectually called and set in the state and kingdome of grace, are governed by Christ their King, and by the Lawes of his kingdome, his Word and Spirit. Therefore they need not outward government of man, outward government by a magistrate is needlesse. This is a meere cavill, having no soundnesse in it. It is easily answered, for if we should but presse them with the perpetuity of the fifth commandment (that requiring subjects to yeeld obedience to their governours, and that being eternall) they are not able to reply. But in a word to answer them; In the visible Church are not onely true believers, but hypocrites (as we are taught in many parables in the Gospell) who are not governed by Gods spirit, but by their owne corrupt lusts: therefore in respect of them, civill government is needfull; yea, the best Churches in the world need civill government, for the punishment of evill doers, and to say there

Object.

Answer.

Vse

If we be not ruled by the word and spirit of Christ, we are not delivered from the power of sinne.

A cavill of the Anabaptists answered.

there needes no civill government, it inclines to that old rotten condemned heresie, that God was not Authour of the old Testament, because there wee finde so many punishments mentioned and executed. Againe, true beleevers ought to bee a Law and a Magistrate to themselves, and so to live as not to neede the civill Magistrate: but yet they doe not, neither can doe, being but in part governed by the Spirit for the time of this life, therefore also in respect of them, for the ordering of the outward man, civill government is necessarie. And to this we may adde, that it is necessary for the protection of the Church, it being open to the malice of Satan and the wicked. Hence the Apostle bids us pray for Kings, and all that be in authority, that wee may leade a quiet and peaceable life under them, in all godlinesse and honestie, 1 Tim. 2. 2. It followeth, the next thing to be marked is, that the Apostle saith, God doth translate his elect into the Kingdome of his Sonne, hee saith not into his owne Kingdome, though the Kingdome of the Sonne (If we respect the Kingdome it selfe) is the Kingdome of the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost, it is a power of the whole Trinity, for the power to make lawes, binding conscience to be obeyed upon paine of life and death, is a power of the whole Trinitie: but the administration of it, is given unto the Sonne, as himselfe witnesseth, Math. 28. 18. *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: therefore he gives commission to his Apostles immediately from himselfe, to goe teach and administer the Sacraments: but the reason why the Apostle saith, Translated into the Kingdome of his Sonne, and not into his owne Kingdome, is, because God the Father doth admit no man to himselfe immediatly, but by the Sonne God and man, the true and onely Mediator betweene God and man, as our Saviour saith: No man cometh unto the Father, but by me, Joh. 14. 6.*

Dott. 6.
No man is under Gods speciall government, but hee that is in the Kingdome of his Sonne.

The point hence following is this, that no man is under the speciall government of God, no man is governed by the speciall grace of God: but he that is in the Kingdome of his Sonne, even a member of the Church, and ordered and ruled by him. It is certaine, the universall government and providence of God is over all creatures, in him they live, move, and have their being, even all in heaven and in earth, yea the damped in hell. Thus *the Lord remaineth a King for ever*, Psal. 29. 10. but none are governed by his speciall grace, that is to say, his grace whereby he doth restraints and mortifie corruption, and daily renew his decayed image in the minde, will and affections, but onely such as are in Christ, such as are effectually called, and justified by Christ. Wee have prooffe of this, Ephes. 2. 12, where the Apostle saith, when the Ephesians were without Christ, they were without God. His meaning is not onely without the true knowledge and worship of God, and such as did neglect both: but such as were neglected, and not regarded of God, in respect of his speciall government, and suffered to walke in their owne wayes and finnes, and to follow the lusts of their owne hearts: for wee may easily conceive, that the words may extend to that meaning, if we compare them with that we reade, verse 19. of that Chapter, *That in Christ they were made Citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God: which words imply speciall care and government, as a wise and good householder hath a speciall care over them of his family: to the Lord being wisdom and goodnesse it selfe, without question, hath a speciall care, and doth carrie a speciall hand over them that bee of his family.*

Reason.

Will we have some strength of reason to confirme this? Then know and consider we, that Gods speciall grace is most free, and not given upon any desert of ours, but on the free and gracious promise of God. Now all the promises of God to his children touching vocation, justification, renowation, &c. are made and fulfilled in Christ alone, he is the foundation and complement of them all, *in him they are all, Tea and Amen*, 2 Cor. 1. 20. Hence it followeth strongly, that

that none are ever governed by the speciall grace of God, but such as bee in Christ, because the promise is made and fulfilled in him and by him.

The point thus cleared, let us further thinke on it, to this speciall purpose: is it so, that none are governed by the speciall grace of God, but such as are in Christ? then every one that desires speciall grace for the mortification of sinne, and for renning the image of God in him, must labour to bee made a member of Christ: let him not suffer his eyes to sleepe; nor temples of his head to take any rest, till hee be assured that he is set into the body of Christ, and made one with him by the bond of his spirit, and by a true faith: and to this purpose knowe it, that as long as we are out of Christ, we cannot pray unto God with assurance of his speciall grace; for faith & assurance to be heard, hath ever relation to the promise; and there is no promise, no nor of any temporary good thing to them that are out of Christ; they that be out of Christ, they cannot truly beleave; they may boldly presume, but they cannot truly beleieve that they shall receive any temporary good thing from the Lord; if they doe, it is but as if a man should thinke to hold the wind in his fist. True faith ever hath relation to the promise, and out of Christ there is no promise; they that be out of Christ come to an absolute God. Hence it is that many pray to God to give them grace to refrain from sinne: being convinced of it in their owne conscience, and told of it, they promise amendment; yea, they pray to God to give them grace to refrain from it; and yet faile to obtaine, because they are out of Christ; whereas if they were in Christ, effectually called and justified, they should receive. Saint Pauls answer, 2 Cor. 12. 9. and finde it made good unto them, though they were not freed from temptation to that sinne, yet they should finde Gods grace sufficient for them; and this ought to stirre us up to labour by all good meanes to bee joyned with Christ, by the bond of his Spirit, and by a true and lively faith; and then we may be sure, if we pray for Gods speciall grace, we shall have it given unto vs: for can or will God suffer us (to whom he hath vouchsafed the blood of his owne Son) to run headlong into sin? certainly no, he will not. Wee may finde that God hath vouchsafed his common, restraining grace to some heathen men: as to *Abimelech*, Gen. 20. 6. God saith, he kept him that he should not sin against him: therefore he will not cast away the humble petition of his chosen; being now actuall members of Christ: no doubtesse, they craving grace, hee will give them his speciall grace, not onely restraining, but mortifying their corruption, and renning them in holinesse after his owne image. Let this then be a speciall inducement to move us to labour to be made members of Christ; and let us gather yet further argument to move us to be made one with Christ, out of this very text: The Apostle saith, Gods Elect effectually called, are translated into the kingdome of his deare Son, that is, the Son of his love, in whom he is well pleased; even well pleased, not onely with him, but in him with all his members. And that this may bee matter to move us, consider how happy and blessed a thing it is to be made deare unto God, it is the very deyr and ground of all true comfort, for then we have peace with God, with our owne consciences, with all the faithfull, yea, with all the creatures in the world, the very beasts and stones of the field are then in league with us, Job. 5. 23. we then have access to the throne of grace with boldnesse, we are assured of Gods speciall presence and protection, we may come into Gods house with joy & gladnesse, we have title to all the blessings of Gods Saints in this life, and right to eternall happinesse in the life to come. Seeing then such is the excellency of our being made neare and deare to God by Christ, this ought to possesse our hearts with S. Pauls affection, Phil. 3. 8. to thinke all things losse that wee may win Christ, and be found in him, and by him be made neare and deare to his Father, and so partakers of all the comforts and blessings of Gods Saints in this life, and in the life to come.

Vse.

Such as desire speciall grace to mortifie sin, and to renew Gods image in them, must labour to become members of Christ.

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Verf.

Verf. 14. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, that is, the forgiveness of finnes.*

IN this verse is contained a manifestation of the worker of salvation, *Iesus Christ*; and the worke wrought by him, *redemption*. More particularly wee may observe in this verse three things.

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First, in whom Gods Elect have redemption; namely, in *Iesus Christ*, in those words [*in whom*]

Secondly, the meanes of their owne redemption, [*his blood*.]

Thirdly, of what manner of redemption the Apostle speaks: even of redemption from their fins, in the last words, whereof the Apostle saith by way of exposition, that is [*the forgiveness of finnes*] let us a little examine the word. [*In whom*] that is, in *Christ* the Sonne of God: for these words have reference to the last words of the verse foregoing, his deare Sonne, [*redemption*] To redeeme in a large and generall acception, signifieth to set free some captive, or some that are oppressed, out of the hands of their enemies or oppressours. Now because such deliverance may either be by strong hand, as God redeemed his people out of Egypt; and as *Abraham* redeemed *Lot*, Gen. 14. 16. or by ranfome: we are here to understand deliverance by ranfome, for so the originall word doth signifie; and the Apostle restraines it to that, and saith in plaine termes, that he gave himselfe a ranfome for all, 1 Tim. 2. 6.

Interpret.

Objection.

This seemes contrary to many places of Scripture, where it is said, that *Christ* redeemed us out of the hands of our enemies, by overcoming them, in the second Chapter of this Epistle, verf. 15. how then did he deliver us by ranfome or price?

Answer.

In respect of God his Father, to whom he offered himselfe without spot, he delivered us by ranfome. But in respect of *Satan*, who had us captives under sinne, the curse, death and damnation: he delivered us by strong hand, he destroyed (through death) him that had the power of death, that is, the devill, he delivered them which (for feare of death) were all their life time subject to bondage, Heb. 2. 14.

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Answer.

We were properly captives to the justice of God in the Law, and the curse of the Law; and unto *Satan* but as the minister of God for the execution of the curse, and so the price of redemption was paid to God to satisfie his justice, to which we were properly in captivity; not to *Satan*, who was but the minister of Gods justice, as the Jaylor or tormenter for the inflicting of punishment, [*through his blood*] that is, the bloody death and passion, his accursed death of the Crosse: therefore the Apostle calls it, verf. 10. the blood of his Crosse, through the sacrifice of himselfe offered upon the Crosse. By [*forgiveness of finnes*] in the last place, wee are to understand deliverance from the guilt of punishment of all fins. Thus then these words are to be conceived.

In which, or by which Sonne of God *Christ Iesus*, we have deliverance from the guilt and punishment of all our finnes, by the ranfome of his death a price paid to God his Father to satisfie his justice.

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First, because he onely is God and man; for it was necessary that our Redeemer should be God and man.

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But will some say, it is no such absurdity to say, that Christ died for some, and redeemed some who shall be damned: it is the speech of the Apostle, 2 Pet. 2. 1. where he saith, *some shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord which hath bought them, and bring upon themselves swift damnation.*

We are to understand those words, *that bought them*, as spoken not according to the judgement of infallibility, and of infallible certainty, but according to their owne judgement, and the judgement of others led by the rule of charity. For to expound the words otherwise, and to say, they were in deed & truth redeemed: were to make Christ a redeemer of some, neither freed from the power of sinne in this life, nor from the power of hell in the life to come, contrary to many plaine places of the Scripture.

It will bee further said, we read in many places of the Scripture, that Christ redeemed the world, Gods was in Christ, and reconciled the world to himselfe, not imputing their finnes unto them, 2 Cor. 5. 19. and 1 Joh. 2. 2. *Hee is the reconciliation for our finnes, and not for ours onely, but also for the finnes of the whole world.*

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1

2nd
3rd
4th

Doff. 1.

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Object.

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Christ a Redeemer in three respects.

I

Doct. 1.
None are redeemed by Christ but only Gods Elect

Object.

Answer.

Object.

Answer.

Object.

If any yet further say, we reade, Tim. 2. 6. that Christ gave himselfe a ran-
some for all men, to be a testimony in due time.

Answer.

The answer is this; not all and every particular man, but all sorts of men, men
of all states, conditions and callings; as it is said of our Saviour, that he healed
every disease, Mat. 4. 23. the meaning is, not every particular disease, but all sorts
of diseases.

Use 1.

Confutation
of that opini-
on, that Christ
died for all
both Elect &
reprobate,

So then (notwithstanding these objections) it remains a firme truth, that
none are redeemed by the death of Christ, but only Gods Elect. This might be
pressed to the confutation of such as hold the contrary opinion; namely, that
Christ his death is not onely sufficient, but effectually for all, both the chosen of
God, and them also that are rejected of God, and that some (notwithstanding
the death of Christ) are condemned, they hold, that comes to passe not for
their sins, as being truly satisfied for by Christ, but for their unbeliefe, by which
they doe againe make the reconciliation made betweene God and them void,
and of none effect; which is an opinion utterly untrue, but I will no further
stand to refute it.

Use 2.

It is a meere
fancie, that
there is uni-
versall re-
demption by
Christ.

Let the application of the doctrine now proved, be to this purpose; to teach
us, that it is but a fond imagination, and a foolish thing for us to thinke, that
there is an universall redemption by Christ, and that hee died for all, as some
vainly shroud themselves under this, without reason or ground, when they are
convinced by sinne, and forced to confesse that they are grievous sinners; then
they flie to this, Christ died for all: many leane to this staffe of reed, and de-
ceive themselves. We must learne to acknowledge and embrace this truth, and
be resolved of it, that Christ died onely for Gods Elect effectually; and if wee
will have comfort by his death, and by the doctrine of redemption wrought
by him, we must labour to finde our selves in the number of the redeemed, and
be able to say with our Apostle in this place, that in Christ we have redemp-
tion. How is that to be done, may some say? Wouldest thou know how thou
mayest finde comfort in the redemption wrought by Christ? then take this
for our infallible rule grounded upon the Word of God, that Christ redeemeth
men not onely from deserved condemnation, but also from their vaine conver-
sation. To whomsoever Christ is a Saviour and Redeemer by merit, procuring
the pardon of sinne; to him he is a Saviour by efficacy also, by turning his heart
from sinne to God: it is plainly propounded, Tit. 2. 14. that Christ gave him-
selfe to redeeme, and to purge: the proposition is copulative, not disjunctive;
and it is the rule of reason, that if one part of the copulative proposition bee
false, the other also is false: If then thou wouldest know whether Christ hath
redeemed thee from the guilt and punishment of sinne, looke into thy selfe, and
see whether he hath purged thee from the filthinesse of sinne; if thou be not
purged from the filthinesse of sinne, out of all question thou art not redeemed
from iniquity: he that is not by Christ his death turned from sinne, is not by it
redeemed from the punishment of sinne, from hell, death, and condemnation.
In that the Apostle saith, The blood of Christ, that is, the death of Christ, the
death of the Crosse, being an accursed death, a death joyned with the maledi-
ction of the Law, Galath. 3. 13. was the meanes of our redemption and delive-
rance. From the guilt and punishment of sinne, we learne to know the horrible
greatnesse of sinne, it being such, as no creature in the world, neither Angell
nor Saint, no not all Angels or Saints were able to appease the wrath of God;
and to satisfie his justice for it, but onely the death of his owne deare
Sonne, no nor (as the dotting Friars doe dreame) one drop of the blood of
Christ, let fall from his finger, had bene sufficient to redeeme us; no
punishment but death, even the cursed death of the Crosse, was sufficient to
that purpose.

*Note.**Doct. 2.*

The greatnesse
of sinne is
knowne by the
death of Christ

Use.

Let us then looke on Christ crucified, by the eye of faith, and wee shall
see

ſee the fearfull and ugly face of ſinne, that God hates it with endleſſe hatred, in that nothing would ſatistie his wrath for it, but the precious blood of his deare Sonne, and that powred out by the curſed death of the Croſſe. Men commonly eſteeme ſome ſinnes but light and trifling : as cuſtome ſwearing, breaking the Sabbath, idleneſſe, wanton jeſting, &c. But wee muſt know that theſe are of ſuch weight, as they pulled downe the Sonne of God from his throne of Maieſty and glory, and cauſed him to humble himſelfe to death, and to ſuffer the curſed death of the Croſſe, and to powre out his moſt precious blood for our redemption : there was no meanes to redeeme us from our ſinnes, but the death of the Sonne of God : therefore learne we to make conſcience of every ſinne, [*through his blood*] I might here enter into the queſtion, and ſpeake at large of it, whether Chriſt ſuffered in ſoule or no ; but I hold it not ſo profitable to ſtand upon that point : onely in a word know we thus much, that whatſoever Chriſt tooke of our nature, he tooke to this end, to ſuffer in it, and by ſuffering to ſave and redeeme it. And againe, wherein *Adam* and we properly ſinned : by the ſame Chriſt (the ſecond *Adam*) made ſatisfaction for ſinne. But Chriſt took the whole nature of man, body and ſoule : and both *Adam* and we commit ſinne both in body and ſoule.

Therefore (no doubt) Chriſt verily and properly ſuffered in ſoule, as hee endured paines and torments in his fleſh. I will not further enlarge this. Come we to ſome other point of further inſtruction. We are to marke, the Apoſtle ſaith, Gods Eleet have redemption, that is, forgivenesse of ſinnes, deliverance from the guilt and puniſhment of their ſinnes through the blood of Chriſt, that is, his bloody death.

The point of inſtruction hence offered is this, that the meanes and meritorious cauſe of remiſſion of ſinnes, is not the body and blood of Chriſt it ſelfe, abſtracted and conſidered apart from his paſſion ; but his body broken, and his blood ſhed, his painfull ſuffering, his bearing in his body and ſoule the extremity of Gods wrath. We need not ſeek farre for prooffe of this : the Apoſtle ſaith in this Chapter, verſ. 20. reconciliation was wrought by him of all things to himſelfe, and that hee ſet at peace through the blood of his Croſſe, both the things in earth, and the things in heaven, verſ. 22. In the body of his fleſh through death : and wee have in expreſſe words, that without ſhedding of blood there is no remiſſion, Heb. 9. 22. he ſaith not without blood, but without ſhedding of blood.

The reaſon and ground of this is, becauſe the Law of God being broken, and God being offended by ſinne, nothing could ſatistie his juſtice, but puniſhment ſuffered, either by the party offending, or by ſome other for him ; for to the breach and tranſgreſſion of the Law, is the curſe annexed : Therefore no ſatisfaction without puniſhment and undergoing of the curſe. Hence it followes neceſſarily, that not the body and blood of Chriſt conſidered apart from his paſſion ; but his body broken, and his blood ſhed upon the Croſſe, is the meanes and meritorious cauſe of remiſſion of ſinne. It may bee demanded, how the breaking of the body of Chriſt, and how Chriſt his ſuffering could be a ſufficient meritorious cauſe procuring remiſſion of ſins, ſeeing we by ſinne had deſerved eternall death, and puniſhment in hell for ever, and Chriſt his ſuffering was but for a time ? I anſwer, we are not to eſteeme the merit and efficacy of Chriſt his death, by the time of his ſuffering, but by the perſon who ſuffered, namely Chriſt, both God and man, united in one perſon, and by vertue of his God-head, he gave power to his death to be meritorious, even of infinite price and value : the Apoſtle proves this in the verſes following : and for further warrant of it, read Act. 20. 28 It is there ſaid, that *God hath purchaſed his Church with his owne blood* : not that God can ſuffer or ſhed blood, but we are thus to conceive it, that Chriſt ſuffered onely as he was man ; yet becauſe the perſonall union of

Wee are to looke upon Chriſt crucified, that wee may ſee the ugly face of ſinne.

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Doct. 2.

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Reaſon.

Obiect.

Anſwer.

Confutation
of Popish tran-
substantiation.

God and man in Christ : it is said, that God shed his blood : giving us to understand the infinite merit and sufficiency of his death.

The point thus proved, come we to apply it : and first, is this a truth, that the meanes and meritorious cause of remission of finnes, is not the body and blood of Christ apart from his death ? then what use is left of popish transubstantiation, for which the Papists much contend. If we should grant unto them, (which they are never able to prove) that the bread and wine in the Sacrament, are turned into the substance of Christ his body and blood : yet what profit should come by that bodily presence ? surely none, by the sentence of our Saviour himselfe, *the flesh profits nothing*, Joh. 6. 63. *Bellarmines* owne confession is, that a man may eat the flesh of Christ, and drinke his blood after a corporall manner, and yet profit himselfe nothing.

Object.

If they say (as in deed they doe) that the body of Christ crucified, and his blood that was shed on the Crosse, is in the Sacrament under the forme of bread and wine.

Answer.

I answer againe, let this also bee granted which can never be proved, yet that body crucified, and that blood shed, is not profitable without the merit of his death and passion, apprehended and applied by the mouth of the soule, namely, by faith. And so though we grant a reall presence of the body of Christ crucified, yet that is not profitable without the merit of his death apprehended by faith. If they say the body of Christ crucified really present, and the merit of his death ever goe together, in respect of the receivers of the Sacrament, and that they that receive the one really present, receive the other : then they fall into a foule absurdity : then they make it an idle distinction of the Apostle, that some are worthy, some unworthy receivers : therfall, good and bad, beleeving and unbeleeving, even (such as the Apostle hath taught us) as eat and drinke their owne damnation : they receive the body and blood of Christ really present, and withall the merit of his death, and so are fed and nourished to eternall life, which as yet is not begonne in them, and it may be they shall never come unto it, and that is a grosse absurdity. Thus we see though wee grant a reall presence, even of the crucified body of Christ, yet there is no use nor profit comes by that bodily presence, and by consequent, the popish doctrine of transubstantiation falls to the ground, because God hath ordained nothing in his Church, either idle or superfluous. To come nearer to our selves : is it so, that the meritorious cause of the remission of finnes is not the body and blood of Christ considered a part from his passion ; but his body broken, and his blood shed upon the Crosse ? we must then know, that it is not sufficient for us to understand, that the bread and wine in the Sacrament, are signes of the body and blood of Christ, for the body and blood of Christ are not profitable, abstracted from the worke done in his body. Many in their simplicity and weaknesse, thinke they are sufficiently instructed in the matter of receiving the Sacrament, if being asked they be able to answer, that the bread signifieth the body of Christ, and the wine his blood : but we must know this is not sufficient, wee are further to take knowledge of it, that the bread and the wine in the Sacrament, are memorials and remembrances of the body of Christ broken, and of his blood shed and powred out on the Crosse for the remission of finnes : wee are not to sever the remembrance of his body from his death and passion ; but together with the remembrance of his body wee are to remember his painfull and meritorious suffering in his body and soule, the wrath of God for our sins ; and when we eat the bread, and drinke the wine of the Sacrament, we are then at the very same instant to lift up our hearts to heaven, and by faith to feed upon the body of Christ broken, and by faith to apprehend and apply the infinite merit of his death and passion to our owne soules, particular for the pardon of our finnes. If wee content our selves with receiving the

V^{se}. 2.
It is not sufficient to understand that the bread and wine in the Sacrament are signes of the body and blood of Christ.

the bread and wine, as signes of the body and blood of Christ, thought upon and considered a part from his passion, wee then make the receipt of the Sacrament unprofitable unto us, and very dangerous and hardfull, for then wee receive the signe, without the thing signified: for if we receive not the whole thing signified, we receive it not at all, and so we prophane the signe, and (as much as is in us) trample the blood of Christ under our feet, we eat and drinke our owne damnation, we hasten some heauey judgement of God upon us. Yea howsoeuer we seeme to disclaime all Popery, yet thus receiving of the bread and wine in the Sacrament, as signes of the body and blood of Christ, never remembring the suffering of Christ in his body, we therein give place to a popish opinion, and to a distinction by them newly devised, that the Sacrament is a remembrance of Christ, and not of his death. Let us then learne our duty, that when we come to receive the Sacrament, wee are then by faith to feed on the body of Christ broken, and on his blood shed on the Crosse.

Come we to the last words, [*that is, the forgiveness of our finnes.*] We are to marke, that the Apostle makes redemption and remission of finnes equiualent, of equall reach and signification, in respect of Gods Elect, that they that are redeemed by the blood of Christ, have by it remission of their finnes; hee expounds the one by the other.

The conclusion hence following is this, that as many as by the worke of the holy Ghost beleeve in Christ, and apprehend and apply the merit of his death, have full and perfect remission of their finnes: for why? by the death of Christ they have perfect redemption, with one offering hath he consecrated or made perfect for ever those that are sanctified, Heb. 10. 14. And here redemption and remission of finnes are made convertible termes, that through the bloody death of Christ we have redemption, that is, remission of finnes: therefore it must needs follow, that as many as truly apprehend the merit of Christs death, have perfect remission of their finnes: This will further appeare, if we consider after what manner sinne is forgiven, and that is by an action of God, whereby for the merit of Christ he accounts sinne as no sinne, or as it were never committed, and as a debt discharged: for so much is implied in that petition, Forgive us our trespasses or debts: forgiveness of sinne being an action of God, it must needs be most perfect, for all the actions of God are most perfect. Again, is it for the merit of Christ? how then can it be any way defective, Christ his merit being infinite, and every way answerable to the justice of God? Can remission of sinne (procured by it) be imperfect? it is not possible. We may then safely conclude, that as many as truly apprehend and apply the merit of Christs death, have full and perfect remission of their finnes: where then is any place for that popish distinction of remission of the fault, and not of the punishment? So the Papists teach, that for the merit of Christ his death, God doth pardon the fault, and the eternall punishment of sinne, but he retaines a temporary punishment to be inflicted on them that have sinne. This distinction cannot stand with the truth now delivered and proved: for if wee have perfect remission of finnes, then both of the fault and punishment, or else we have but halfe, maimed, and imperfect remission. A little further to discover the weaknesse, and indeed the wickednesse of this popish doctrine, consider we these reasons.

First, beside the relation that is betweene the fault and the punishment, (the punishment ever having a relation to a foregoing fault, and in respect of the fault is the punishment inflicted) besides this, we shall finde in many places of the Scripture, such affinity, and so neare agreement betweene the fault and the punishment, as that these two are taken sometimes one for the other. *They shall beare their iniquitie*, Levit. 20. 19. 20. that is to say, the punishment of their iniquity. *He bare our finnes in his body on the tree*, 1 Pet. 2. 24. that is to say, the punishment of our finnes: for the Apostle in that speech of his had an eye to that

Doct. 2.

Such as truly apprehend and apply the merit of Christ his death, have full and perfect remission of sins.

Note.

Use 1.

Confutation of that popish distinction of the fault pardoned, and the punishment retained.

Reason 1.

that, *Iſa. 53. 5. He was wounded for our transgreſſions, he was broken for our iniquities, the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him, and with his ſtripes are we healed.* Hereby then would the Holy Ghoſt have us to underſtand, that the fault and puniſhment of ſinne cannot be ſo farre diſjoyned and ſo drawne aſunder, (as the popiſh ſort would have them) that the one ſhould be pardoned, and the other ſtill retained.

2

Againe, if God inflict any puniſhment on him whoſe fault is remitted, and on him whoſe ſinne is taken away by the blood of Chriſt (for ſo ſpeakes the Scriptures, *Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the finnes of the world,* Joh. 1. 29.) then he is unjuſt: but farre be it from us ſo to thinke. It is all one as to require the payment and ſatiſfaction of a debt forgiven, which (whoſoever doth) is unjuſt. If then they will not lay that imputation upon the Lord, which they would bee loth to lay upon a miſerable, mortall and ſinfull man, they muſt not charge him with puniſhing any ſinne that hee hath forgiven.

3

Thirdly, if this be true, that when God doth not remit ſinne, he retaines the puniſhment of it, then it followeth neceſſarily on the contrary, that when hee doth forgive the ſinne, he doth not retain the puniſhment of it.

+ 4

To this we may joyne many plaine places of Scripture, where it is ſaid, The Lord doth not impute ſinne, but cover it: that hee will not remember the finnes of his choſen any more, but caſt them behind his backe: that he will take them away like a cloud, drowne them in the bottome of the ſea; and many other ſpeeches we finde of like ſort: all which concur and meet together in this point of truth, and of ſweet comfort, that the Lord for the precious merit of the blood of Chriſt, doth pardon as well the puniſhment, as the ſinne of his choſen. For as one ſaith truly, and well to this purpoſe, if the Lord impute not, he puniſheth not; if he remember not, he revegeth not; if he cover, he calls not to judgement; if he caſt behinde his backe, hee examines not. Let not then any diſtinction deviſed by the popiſh ſort (ſo contrary to the juſtice of God, and the plaine evidence of the Word of God) ſtrip us of that excellent comfort we may finde in this: that by the death of Chriſt, as many as truly apprehend and apply it to themſelves, have full and perfect remiſſion of ſinne, and freedome from all puniſhments, temporall and eternall.

Exception.

But againſt this they except, that ſome whoſe finnes are pardoned, have (notwithſtanding) ſickneſſe, poverty, contempt, yea, death inflicted on them. Therefore (ſay they) though ſinne be forgiven, yet the temporall puniſhment is not removed.

Answer.

Theſe things ſpoken of, and the like (to them that be in Chriſt, and by him have the pardon of their finnes) are corrections, fatherly chaſtiſements, and tokens of Gods love, *whom he loveth he chaſtiſeth,* Heb. 12. 6. not puniſhments of ſinne forgiven, not proceeding from an angry and diſpleaſed God. Againe, they are laid on the deare children of God, to worke in them amendment, and care to avoid ſinne, and for the exerciſe of faith, the triall of patience, the ſtirring up of ſome languishing graces that are in them, and for other good ends, and not to ſatiſfie for the temporall puniſhment. Admit they were properly and truly puniſhments (which cannot bee proved,) yet could they never answer and ſatiſfie the juſtice of God: for to ſatiſfie God, is not onely to pay that we owe unto him, but it doth inferre and imply full reconciliation with God, and a pacification of his anger, and that God is well pleaſed with him that doth ſatiſfie. Now the ſuffering of puniſhment cannot ſo ſatiſfie God, if it bee conſidered by it ſelfe: for then the damned in hell (ſuffering puniſhment) ſhould ſatiſfie God, which is moſt falſe: therefore the perſon that muſt ſatiſfie God (by ſuffering puniſhment) muſt be conſidered: and he muſt be more than a meere man, even God and man, not onely able to undergoe the puniſhment, but alſo ſuch

such a one in whom God the Father is well pleased as himselfe doth witnesse from heaven, Matth. 3. 17. So then, though we grant that sicknesse, poverty, and such like, were punishments; yet could they not satisfie the justice of God, because the suffering of punishment (considered by it selfe) doth not satisfie God, unlesse the person suffering be more than a meere man, even God and man, and such a one in whom God is well pleased.

Howsoever then true beleevers have sicknesse, poverty, and such like, laid upon them, yet we must know they are laid on them as fatherly chastisements and corrections, or as trials for the exercise of their faith and patience, for the stirring up of the good graces that be in them, and not as punishments: and if they were laid on them as punishments, yet could they not satisfie the justice of God. And therefore wee are not to suffer our selves to bee drawne from this truth, full of sweet comfort, that by the bloody death of Christ, all that truly lay hold of the merit of it, have full and perfect remission of their sins, and freedom from all punishments temporall and eternall.

Againe, is it so, that by the blood of Christ we have perfect remission both of fault and punishment? Let then as many of us as truly beleeve it, learne our duty following upon it, and that is this; when wee forgive the offences of our brethren, we are wholly to forgive them, even utterly to forgoe all malice against offenders, or offences against us. It is plainly taught by the Apostle, Eph. 4. vers. 32. *forgiving one another, even as God for Christ his sake forgave you.* How doth God for Christ his sake forgive us? Wee have heard it delivered and proved even fully and perfectly: therefore wee must take heed of mincing the matter, and of halfe remission to our brethren, forgiving some part of the offence, and carrying a peece unforgiven: *O evill servant* (saith our Saviour in the Parable, Matth. 18. 32. *I forgave thee, not a peece, but all;* and as I had pity on thee, so certainly thy pity ought to have extended as farre as mine, to the forgiveness of the whole debt of thy fellow servant. We see then our duty, that in forgiving the offences of our brethren, we are to follow the example of the Lord, we are fully and wholly to forgive them. And to that purpose, know and consider we but this one thing, that if we forgive not all to our brethren whensoever they have offended us, we cannot then put up that petition to the Lord, *Forgive us our debts,* as we also forgive our debtors, with any comfort. Let the latter part of that petition be a promise of ours to the Lord, or a Law binding all that looke for mercy from the Lord, to shew mercy; or a note of assurance. We cannot use it with comfort, we therein fearefully pray against our selves, for we reserving a peece of our nature against our brethren: in that petition wee beseech the Lord to reserve also a part of his wrath against us, forgiving us but as wee forgive others: and that being well considered, is able to make any heart (seasoned with grace) to tremble to thinke upon it, that wee should so fearefully open our mouths, yea, so boldly with our owne tongues, call for wrath and vengeance from Almighty God. Let us (as we ought) consider and thinke upon it, and let it stirre us up fully and wholly to forgive the offences of our brethren: let us not remember in malice the least offence of our brethren, lest the Lord remember in judgement any of our finnes, and strike us (as hee may justly) both body and soule to the bottome of hell, where no remission nor redemption is to be hoped for.

Verf. 15. *Who is the image of the invisible God, the first borne of every creature.*

Verf. 15.

THe Apostle here begins his prooffe, of the sufficiencie of the worke of redemption wrought by Christ, that he is a perfect and sufficient Redeemer of Gods chosen his prooffe is laid downe in three verses, the 15. 16. & 17. hee proves

Vse. 2.
Our duty is wholly to forgive the offences of our brethren.

Christ the
image of God
his Father,
two wayes.
Interpret.

proves it from the dignity of his person, shewing that hee is true and eternall God, and therefore a perfect Redeemer. And that Christ is true and eternall God, is first propounded by the Apostle, vers. 15. and then confirmed vers. 16. and 17. In the 15. verse, containing the generall proposition, are two things affirmed of Christ, first, that he is the image of the invisible God: and secondly, the first-borne of every creature.

Come wee to more speciall examination of these things: and for the first, I will stand a while to open the sense and meaning of the words, and not to trouble you with any curious and unnecessary speculations, but to hold to the scope and drift of the Apostle, which was to propound sound doctrine of faith, and to teach how with profit we are to conceive of the person of Christ. Know that Christ is the image of God his Father two wayes. First, as he is the eternall Sonne, of the same substance with the Father: and so his most absolute and perfect essentiall image: for having the very same eternall essence and substance with the Father, he doth most perfectly represent him. Hence hee is said to be the *brightnesse of his glory, and the engraven forme of his person*, Heb. 1.3. Secondly, as he is *God manifested in the flesh*, as the Apostle speaks, 1 Tim. 3. 16. because God being invisible, doth manifest himselfe in Christ, in whom hee hath made himselfe knowne to us, to be most wise, just and mercifull: most wise, because in Christ he expressed towards us, both perfect, justice, and perfect mercy: and in Christ most just, because in him he perfectly punished all our sinnes laid on him, as on our surety: and most mercifull also in Christ, because of his merit and satisfaction, he perfectly forgave his chosen all their sins, and made them heires, of his kingdome of glory: thus is Christ the image of God.

The next word to be expounded is [*invisible*:] for the clearing of that, consider wee thus much. That seeing is of two sorts, either with the outward eye of the body, or with the eye of the minde. Concerning the outward sight, whereby curious and ignorant people would bee glad to see God, hardly thinking there is a God, because they see him not with their bodily eyes: the truth is, God cannot bee seene, because hee is a Spirit most simple and pure, and not subject to the outward sense: therefore he saith to *Moses*, Exod. 33. 20. *Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live.* And the Apostle saith, 1 Tim. 6. 16. *God dwelleth in the light that none can attaine unto, whom never man saw, neither can see.* Touching sight by the eye of the minde, we must distinguish our estate here in this life, from that it shall be in the life to come, and know, that by the minde (whilest we are here) we are not able to see God, and he is in himselfe, because all our knowledge here, is by some outward formes or fashions, which wee conceive in our minde and understanding: and though we finde it said, that the Lord spake to *Moses face to face*, Exod. 33. 11: we are to know that those words note only a more familiar and gracious manner of speaking, not that he saw God in substance and essence as he is. And in the life to come (as many as goe to heaven) shall see God in a most excellent manner, and with such comfort as no heart can comprehend, *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*, Mat. 5. 8. yet not simply as he is in his owne nature, because he is infinite, and we shall still be finite, though changed from corruption. Thus we have made it plaine, how God is invisible, because no way can he be seene (as he is in his owne nature) of any creature, either with the eye of the body, or with the eye of the minde, in this life or in the life to come. It is onely the Sonne of God that hath that sight of God his Father, for hee is in the bosome of his Father: and the sight that man or Angell hath of God in heaven, is by a mediate person, the Sonne of God. So then the meaning of the Apostle in these words is briefly this, who is the eternall Son of God, of the same substance with his Father, and in whom being incarnate, God who is invisible, not to be seene either with the eye of the body, or with the eye of the mind, in this life,

life, or in the life to come, in his owne nature immediately, hath made himselfe knowne to be most wise, iust and mercifull.

Now to the doctrine hence to be gathered: First, we are to marke that the Apostle doth fetch his prooffe of the sufficiencie of our redemption from the God-head of Christ, that he is the essentiall image of God his Father, and therefore a sufficient and perfect Redeemer, that is the Apostles reason. Whence we may conclude, that the God-head of Christ is the first ground of our redemption, it is not grounded first upon the man-hood of Christ, but upon Jesus Christ, God equall with the Father in Majestie and glory. Yet wee must remember that he is our Mediatour, in respect of both natures, divine and humane, I will not enlarge the point, having said something of it before.

But for the use in a word: it being so that the first ground of our redemption is the God-head of Christ; it must needs follow, that his blood is a most precious blood, and our redemption made by his blood, must of necessity hold and stand firme and fast for ever: all the power of hell shall never bee able to overturne it; if once wee truly beleve in Christ, wee can never utterly cast away. Upon this very ground, *that he and his Father are one*, doth our Saviour inferre, *that his sheepe shall never perish*, Joh. 10. 28. And keepe this for a sure ground, when thou art tempted about thy redemption, and the certainty of it. Wee are further here to marke, that the Apostle proving Christ a perfect Redeemer, by an argument from his God-head, saith not in one word, that hee is God, but hee delivers it in these termes, that hee is the image of the invisible God, a true and lively representation of God, setting out unto us his infinite wisdom, justice and mercy.

The point of instruction hence following, is this; that true and saving knowledge of Christ, can never be severed from the true knowledge of the infinite wisdom, justice and mercy of God. They that truly know Christ, and by the eye of a true faith looke upon him, doe in him and by him see and behold, know and acknowledge the infinite wisdom, justice and mercy of God: as when wee looke on the true patterne, and expresse image of any thing, we come to know the shape and forme of the first type, the thing resembled: so looking and truly beholding Christ, the true image of God, wee cannot but know the wisdom, justice, and mercy of God his Father, revealed and appearing in him. It is the speech of Christ himselfe, Joh. 14. 7. *If yee had knowne mee, yee should have knowne my Father also*. And when Philip said unto him, *Lord shew us thy father, and it sufficeth*: Our Saviour checketh him, verse the ninth: *Have I bene so long time with you, and hast thou not knowne me Philip? hee that hath seene me, hath seene my Father*. How then sayest thou, *shew us thy Father*? To this agrees that of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 4. 4. that Christ, *which is the image of God, should not shine unto them*: then verf. 6. that *we have the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Iesus Christ*, come to apply this. Is it so, that they who truly know Christ, doe in him, and by him as in a cleare glasse, see, behold, and know the wisdom, justice and mercy of God: then let this be to us a ground of examination.

Let us every one from hence learne to reason backe againe on this manner: if we truly know not the wisdom, justice and mercy of God, not by litterall, but by spirituall knowledge, even by speciall instinct, and working knowledge, then we know not Christ by any true & saving knowledge: for they that truly know Christ, know with him, and by him, the wisdom, justice and mercy of God. If many men and women were examined touching this point, though they professe Christ and Christian religion, yet they would be found to know God no more than the very heathen, who never heard of Christ. I dare be bold to say, many there be that have onely a naturall knowledge of God, which all men have by the light of nature, or such as is gathered by the sight of the creatures.

Doct. 1.

The God head of Christ is the first ground of our redemption.

Vse

Our redemption only by the blood of Christ, stands firme and fast for ever.

Doct. 2.

True & saving knowledge of Christ, is never severed from true knowledge of Gods infinite wisdom, justice and mercy.

Vse.

Triall and examination of our selves.

tures. And that no man may except against my speech, and say, this is hard that we should be so taxed: we live in a Church where the knowledge of God is plainly taught, we heare it sounding in our eares, and we cannot be so ignorant, Let them therefore heare how I prove it from the mouth of the Apostle, in Cor. 15. 34. He saith of them, that said, *Let us eat and drinke, for to morrow we shall die. Awake to live righteously, for some have not the knowledge of God.*

The proposition is laid downe by the Apostle, and it is thus: They that give themselves to eating, and drinking, and sensuality, and live securely in their sinnes, have not the knowledge of God: now the assumption may be made by too many in the world, and then the conclusion must needs follow upon the premises, that they have no knowledge of God. If they will have it farther proved, then heare the Lords owne argument, Hosea 4. 2. he saith, *verse the 1. He had a controversie, hee was to enter an action against his people for want of knowledge, and how doth he prove it? thus, vers. 2. By swearing and lying, killing and stealing, and whoring; they break out, and blood touched blood. To goe so further than the very first thing. Is swearing an argument of the want of knowledge of God? It must needs bee so, God having manifested himselfe most plainly a just avenger of that sinne: then many there bee that can tell themselves, if they will not palpably flatter themselves, that they are such as know not God, their speeches are more powdered with oaths, than their meat with salt; yea, their children may witnesse against them, whose tongues are no sooner taught to speake plainly, but they learne to sweare most wickedly. A man may heare it from them playing in the streets, and so may truly judge of the parents, that they have no true knowledge of God themselves, neither care they to teach others under them, either by word or example, to know the Lord.*

It is then plainly proved against many, that will they, nill they, of force they must confesse, they have no true knowledge of God. Then let such as bee convinced, consider that which was before delivered: that they know not Christ by any saving knowledge, but as the devils know him: and let them marke the sequell, and that which followes upon this, that they not knowing Christ, Christ will not know them: when he comes to divide betweene the sheepe and the goats, he will not then acknowledge them for his, but say, *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I know you not.* Which is a heaive sentence, and to bee thought on with trembling: and let it stirre us up to labour for the true knowledge of God, as hee hath manifested himselfe in Christ, a God of infinite wisdom, justice, and mercy, not a God all of mercy and no justice: that is, to set up an idoll of our owne braine, to thinke that there is mercy with God though we repent not, but goe on in our sinnes. Let us labour to know God as he hath revealed himselfe in Christ, his expresse image, a God of infinite wisdom, justice and mercy, that so we may assure our selves we truly know Christ, and are knowne of Christ, and shall bee acknowledged to be his at his coming. And to helpe us yet forward in this duty, let us further consider, that if the heathen were left without excuse by the sight of the creatures, then much more shall we by the sight of Christ, the expresse image of God, if we know not God as we ought: if we have greater light and meanes to know God by the coming of Christ in the flesh than they: what a shame is it to have lesse knowledge than they. If wee in Christ see not Gods infinite wisdom and mercy, we are most blinde, we are even fooles, besotted and bewitched by the Devill, they are the words of the Apostle, Gal. 3. 1. *O foolish Galatians who have been bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth to whom Iesus Christ was before described in your sight and among you crucified.* If Christ be set before us in lively colours by the preaching of the Word, and the administration of the Sacraments, and we see not in him the infinite wisdom, justice, and mercy of God, we are bewitched and deluded by the devill. Let this bee thought on, and let

Note.

it ſtirre us up to labour to know the infinite juſtice and mercy of God expreſſed in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.

We are here to marke the Epithite the Apoſtle here gives to God, *inviſible*: he ſaith not, the image of God omnipotent, omniſcient, omnipreſent, though theſe things might have beene truly affirmed of God; but the image of the inviſible God: whereby (no doubt) he would have us to underſtand, that the ſame God who is Almighty, filling heaven and earth, even hee is inviſible, the ſame God who is every where preſent, yet is not to bee ſcene. Our leſſon ariſing hence is this: we are to acknowledge God to be every where preſent, though inviſible, and though we ſee him not: for God who fills both heaven and earth is inviſible, and cannot be ſcene: if he could be ſcene, then muſt he be a body; and if ſo, then to be divided into parts, and included in a place, and not ſo infinite: contrary to that, *Psalm. 145. 3.* Great is the Lord, his greatneſſe is incomprehenſible, not to be ſhut up within the compaſſe of any place: we are therefore to know and acknowledge that God is every where preſent, though not ſcene of us. We finde this point expreſſed in moſt excellent termes by *David*, *Psalm. 139.* where there is not a word eſcapes him, that God was ſcene of him. *David* knew it well, that he was a Spirit inviſible, but yet he ſets it out in moſt excellent manner, that God was every where preſent with him; that hee was with him at his downe ſitting, and at his upriſing, about his bed, and about his paths; not a word in his tongue but he knew it: let him move it either upward or downward, to the right hand or to the left, with never ſo great ſpeed, even as ſpeedily as the Sunne beames, from the Eaſt to the Weſt, yet he could not flee from the preſence of the Lord, nor hide himſelfe under any covert or darkneſſe, from the all-ſeeing eye of God. Thus it was with *David*, and we are to learne it by his example: thus it ought to be with us, we are to acknowledge God, though inviſible, and not ſcene of us, yet every where preſent. And if we would further be reſolved of this point, for the ground of it, conſider we but that which experience may teach us namely this: men many times who ſinne in ſecret, and have no eye of man looking on them, yet notwithstanding they tremble and feare. Whence comes this? Surely theirowne conſcience tels them that their cloſe and ſecret finnes are ſcene of God, though hee bee not ſcene of them; yea, when the conſcience doth faile in this teſtimony, (as many times it doth, being hardened by cuſtome of ſinne) then the very dumbe and ſenſleſſe creatures are ſometimes made remembrancers and accuſers of men for their finnes, as the Lord threateth by his Prophet, *Habak. 2. 11.* Stories are full of examples of this kinde: yea, (no doubt) many of us may remember that we have either knowen or heard of ſome who have beene brought to confeſſe their ſecret ſins by the ſight of the fowles of the aire: yea, ſometimes ſuch diſeaſes have beene ſent upon men, as have made their own mouths to publiſh and bewray their ſecret ſinne. What are theſe things but even plaine evidences and demonſtrations, that though God be inviſible, yet he is every where preſent, and ſees things done in the moſt ſecret places in the world, and when it pleaſeth him, and by what meanes it liketh him beſt, doth he bring them to light. Wee are then to acknowledge it for a truth, though God be inviſible, yet he is every where preſent.

To enforce this yet further (becauſe indeed that is chiefly to be intended and driven at in this point) that wee may labour to have in our hearts a ſetled acknowledgement of it.

Conſider firſt, it is one ſpeciall meanes to worke in inward ſoundneſſe and truth of heart: nothing is more effectuell to keepe us from hypocriſie, and many other groſſe finnes, than this: what ſervant ſo lewd, that will not yeeld to his maſter, eye ſervice at the leaſt: in like ſort, when we know and acknowledge Gods preſence, and that his eye looketh on us, that he is a beholder, a

K

witreſſe

Doct. 3.

We muſt acknowledge God to be every where preſent, though we ſee him not.

Uſe.

Our hearts are to bee ſetled in the truth of doctrine before delivered: it will be a meanes to keep us, firſt from hypocriſie.

Secondly, from
sinning upon
supposed se-
crecie.

witnesse and iudge of all our actions, and if we sinne, we lie open to his iudgements. Who is it (but one given over to sin, and to the power of hell) that will not feare to offend? the undoubted perswasion of Gods presence will set a bar before our corruption, and keep it in: againe, it takes from our corruption, and from Satans alluring us unto sinne, that advantage which many times is imagined, that is, secrecies that we may sin because we are in secret, it is a corruption bred and borne with us to seeke corners to commit sinne, shifts and excuses to hide it. The eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, and saith, no eye shall see me, and disguiseth his face, Job 24. 15. Upon this the devill takes advantage, and by it prevailes so farre with some, that hee doth utterly blot out of their minds the remembrance of Gods presence, and make them to presume to sinne with boldnesse, because (as they imagine) they are in secret, that God, he is above, and the clouds they hide him that hee cannot see, and hee is in the circle of heaven, Job 22. 14. Now this corruption of ours, and this subtilty of Satan is crossed, and that liberty that some give themselves to sinne, is taken away, by a setled perswasion of this, that God, though he be invisible, yet he is every where present. As many as truly acknowledge God every where present, they cannot be emboldned to sinne, the devill cannot prevaile with them to sinne, because they are in secret, and want witnesses: for they know God sees them, and there is no creature which is not manifest in his sight. Let us then labour to have in our hearts a full perswasion of this, that God, though he be invisible, yet he is every where present, and we shall finde it effectual to worke in us inward soundnesse of heart, and a notable meanes to defeat the subtilty and cunning of the devill: that hee shall not be able to circumvent us, as he doth many thousands in the world, perswading with them that they are in secret, and therefore they may sinne. We shall bee able to beat backe his assault, and to tell him, though we see not God, yet God doth see us, and all we think, speak, or doe: which is more than if all the men in the world should see us: for he can kill soule as well as body, and cast both soule and body into hell fire.

Interpret.

Come we to the second thing affirmed of Christ in this verse, that hee is the first borne of every creature. And for the understanding of the words, we must know that the Apostle calls Christ the first borne, by way of resemblance and allusion to the first borne in the old Testament. Now Christ is so called in a double respect: first, because as the first borne were brought forth before the rest of their brethren: so Christ, as God, was begotten of the substance of his Father before any creature was made, or had being: he was begotten from all eternity, after an unspeakable manner, before the world was. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, Ioh. 1. 1.* When things created began to be, then he was, and so before all creatures, even from eternity: for time began together with the world, and before the Creation was eternity.

Secondly, because as the first borne sonne among the people of Israel, succeeded his Father in the Kingdome and Priest-hood, and was Lord and Governour of his brethren: so Christ was made heire of the world, Heb. 1. 2. and chiefe Governour of Gods family, his children elected and adopted in him. Now here we are to understand the words of the Apostle, in the first respect, not in the second: because the purpose of the Apostle was here to set out unto us the eternity of Christ his God-head, and not to speake of him as God and man: for in that respect, namely, in respect of his man-hood, assumed into unity of person with his God-head, he is resembled to the first borne, as he hath relation to his Church; therefore called the first borne among many brethren, Rom. 8. 29. So then the words are thus to be conceived. Who was begotten of God his Father from all eternity, before any creature was made, or had being.

Let

Let us now come to the doctrine offered from these words. First, wee are to marke, that the Apostle speaking of the eternity of Christ, hee sets it downe simply, that he was from all eternity; but in a comparison, that hee is the *first borne of every creature*: whence wee are taught, that the eternall generation of Christ is unspeakable. As he is God begotten of his Father from all eternity, we are not able to comprehend it, but by way of shadow or resemblance. He is said to have a name written, that no man knowes but himselfe, Rev. 19. 12. and the Prophet saith, *Who shall declare his age?* Isa. 53. 8.

Let us not then curiously search into it, nor into any of Gods mysteries, further than the holy Ghost in the Word goes before us. And take for a truth, they that know God, and his secrets revealed in his Word, are thus affected: they modestly and humbly come to the hearing of the Word, and with trembling hearts, and the more the Lord openeth himselfe and his mysteries to them, the more they finde and feelee their owne wants & weaknesse to behold such glory, and none come more boldly, and with lesse reverence and preparation, than they that know nothing.

Come wee to another thing offered unto us from his resemblance, full of sweet comfort to all that belong to Christ, namely this, Christ the eternall Sonne of God (saith the Apostle) is as the first borne: then any may easily gather it, that hee is most deare and tenderly beloved of God his Father: even so deare, as the first borne Sonne is commonly to an earthly father: nay, there is no comparison betweene them, but onely for our capacity it may thus bee delivered: his love exceedeth the love of the most kind father in the world, as farre as God excels dust, earth, sinne and corruption. To stand to prove this, were as much as to goe about to adde light to Sunne: let us rather consider the comfort of it. Wee know what affection every one commonly beares to the fruit of his owne body, to his first-borne: he cannot endure to looke upon the abuse of any part of it. It would goe to the heart of a tender father, to see a legge or an arme of his first-borne cut off by the hand of a bloody butcher: let this lead us to the consideration (as we are able to conceive it) of the Lords tender love and affection to the members of Christ, his first borne: and teach us, that hee much lesse endures the wrongs done to any member of his Sonne: cruelties exercised on them pierce his gracious bowels. The Lord may, and doth suffer many afflictions to bee laid on the members of Christ for their good, best knowne to himselfe. As an earthly father (perceiving cause of further good) doth sometime suffer his childe to lie in prison, to bee in want, to bite on the bridle for a time; and, as the saying is, hee may see him need, but hee can never endure to see him bleed: so our gracious God in his wilddome, (for much good knowne to himselfe) may see the members of his Sonne humbled, schooled, and wanted from the love of this wretched world; but undone, and verily cast away, hee cannot endure it, he will not suffer it, no, he will not see it. Let this be had in remembrance, as a sweet comfort to all Gods children in their greatest affliction.

Verf. 16. *For by him were all things created, which are in heaven, and which are in earth, visible and invisible: whether they be Thrones or Dominions, Principallities or Powers, all things were created by him, and for him.*

The Apostle in this verse proves his generall proposition, laid downe in verf. 15. That Christ is the true eternall God, begotten of his Father from all eternity; this he proveth by two arguments. First, because Christ is the Creator of all things. Secondly, because all things were created & made for his glory. The first argument is laid downe in the first words, *for by him were all things made*; and that is resumed and repeated in the latter end of the verse. In which argument, is speciall relation to the words of the former verse, that he is the *first borne*.

Doct. 4.

The eternall generation of Christ is unspeakable.

Vse.

Wee are not curiously to search into Christ his eternall generation.

Doct. 5.

Christ is most deare and tenderly beloved of God his Father.

Vse.

Comfort to the members of Christ.

Verf. 16.

borne of every creature. For if all things were created by him, then it must needs follow, that he was before all things, and that he was not created, as *Arrian* heretickes hold, but begotten of his Father from everlasting.

Now this argument is further laid abroad by a double difference of things created: the Apostle was not content to say in generall, that by Christ all things were created; but he doth further particularize and unfold what he meanes by all things. First, by a difference of place, wherein things created are, heaven and earth, which are in heaven, and which are in earth, then by difference of their quality, visible, and invisible. After this followeth another amplification by speciall instance, the Apostle insisting in one sort of invisible creatures, namely, Angels, which he calls by these titles of honour and dignity, *Thrones or Dominions, Principalities or Powers*: hee hath made all invisible creatures, even the most excellent invisible creatures, the Angels, whether ye call them *thrones* &c. and then repeats the generall, *all things were created by him*: and thus farre goeth the first argument. The second is in the very last words (*and for him*) and these be the parts of this verse. Come we to speake of the words, as they are laid downe by the Holy Ghost; and first of the words, (*for by him were all things created*) whereas the Apostle saith (*by him*) namely, by Christ: though that phrase and forme of speech applied to any worke, doe commonly signifie the meanes or instrument of working: yet here wee are not so to conceive it, as that Christ was an under instrument, or inferior meanes of creating, as the *Arrian* hereticks wickedly would have concluded, but that by his substantiall power and vertue, equall to the power of God his Father, all things were created, *Whatsoever the Father doth, the same things doth the Sonne also*, Joh. 5. 19. And againe, wee are not to understand these words (*by him*) as spoken exclusively, as shutting out God the Father, and holy Ghost, for that is contrary to the first Article of our Creed, that God the Father is the Creator of all things, and wee are to remember the rule, that *Opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*; and therefore the work of Creation is a work of the whole Trinity. But we are to conceive of this, and of that in the first Article, as set downe only to shew the order and manner of the Creation, that God the Father, as he is the fountaine of the God-head, not temporall, but originall, so as the first author, he created all things by God the Sonne, as Joh. 1. 3. *All things were made by it*, that is, by the Sonne, the substantiall Word of the Father, (*created*) that is, which were not before, formed and made to be, and that of nothing. Thus then are these words to be conceived: for by his substantiall power, equall to the power of God his Father, working together with the Father and the Holy Ghost, were all things (that were not before) framed and made, and that of nothing.

Interpret.

Doct. 1.
The worke of
Creation is a
plaine prooff
of the God-
head.

Now to the doctrine: first wee are to marke the argument of the Apostle, that he proves Christ to be true and eternall God, by an argument from the Creation, that he created all things, and therefore he is God eternall. Whence it followeth directly and plainly, that the worke of Creation doth manifestly evince and prove the God-head, hee is God that creates: and backe againe, hee that is able to create is God: for it is a property peculiar to the God-head, and incommunicable, to create: it cannot be given nor agree to any creature, Saint or Angell; no not to all the Saints and Angels: for that were to make them omnipotent: to give being to any thing that was nothing before, is proper to God. It is the Lords owne argument to prove him selfe God, Isa. 45. 7. Hee saith vers. 6. *I am the Lord, and there is none other*. How proves hee that? vers. 7. *I forme the light, and create darknesse: I make peace, and create evill: I the Lord doe all these things*. And Jerem. 10. 11. hee brings it as an argument against Idols and false gods, to prove them no gods, but meeere vanities (as hee calls them) and subject to destruction. Thus (saith hee)

shall

shall you say unto them. The gods which have not made the heavens & the earth, shall perishe from the earth, and from under the heavens: and verl. 12. (by way of opposition) He hath made the earth, and established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.

The point is cleare, and for use of it, first it serves to discover the error of the *Manichees*, such as held there were two authors, and two beginnings of things created, of good and profitable, God; of evill and hurtfull, the Devill; we are to avoid this as erroneous and false, and know that all things were created by God.

God made all good things, how then came materiall evill things? not to speake of naturall evill, as death and diseases, or morall evill, sinne) how came Scorpions, venomous Serpents to be evill and hurtfull: will you say that God made them so?

No, God made all things good indeed, they were good by creation. God looked on all that hee had made, and saw it was good; but they became hurtfull accidentally by sinne: if man had not sinned, no creature had beene hurtfull unto him: but upon the fall, the Lord said, Genes. 3. 7. *Cursed is the earth for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the dayes of thy life.* Again, wee are to consider, that the most poysonfull thing in the world is good for something, though we know not the use of it; experience teacheth that one poyson is driven out by another, therefore we are to say with the Psalmist, *O Lord how manifold are thy works, in wisdom thou hast made them all; the earth is full of thy riches,* Psal. 104. 24.

Again, is it so, that he is God that createth, and hee that is able to create is God: then let this teach us to take heed of a cunning subtilty and sleight of the devill, who as in many other things, so in this, in the worke of creation, of making things of nothing, would seeme to imitate God, and would be like God; as by Juglers, Inchanters, and such like his instruments, hee would seeme to make that to be, which is not, and so doth win to himselfe from simple people that runne after men of that cursed crue; (from such I say, as are simple, and in the Lords iust judgement given over to themselves) an opinion of great power, we are to take heed of this subtilty, and know that the devill cannot make the least creature of the world: he (by Gods permission, and for our triall) may deinde the outward senses, and make things appeare to be which are not, as *Iannes* and *Isambres* did: they turned their rods into serpents, and brought frogs, &c. Exod. chap. 7. and 8. and the witch of Endor made counterfeit *Samuel* to rise out of the earth, 1 Sam. 28. 14. but he cannot make any true, reall, and substantiall creature, or change a creature of one kind into another. When it pleaseth God to reffraime him, he is not able to bring a counterfeit lowse, a base creature: as we read of the Egyptian Inchanters; they assayed likewise with their enchantments to bring forth life, but they could not, Exod. 8. 18. Let us not then be carried away with any conceit, that the devill can by a Jugler or Inchanter, make any true creature. And because many there bee that are too forward to give heed to Juglers, and such deceivers: I would entreat them but to consider the danger of giving heed to such persons: and let them know, that by such meanes the devill doth encroach & gather ground upon them, and in time doth get so furre within them, as he doth seat & settle himselfe upon their thoughts; hee makes them to magnifie him in their conceit, yea, to deifie him in his instruments, and to ascribe unto him, that which is proper unto God, even the power of creating things of nothing, which is a most grosse and abominable idolatry, in our thoughts to set up and magnifie the devill instead of God: what can be more grosse? it was the sinne of the Heathen.

But they will say, this is my fume and imagination.

I answer them, I am able to warrant it from the Word of God, Act. 8. 9: we

Vse 1.

Confutation
of the Mani-
chees.

Object.

Answer.

Vse 2.

We are to take
heed of Satans
sleight in imi-
tating the work
of Creation.

Obiection.

Answ.

finde that *Simon* the Sorcerer used witchcraft, and bewitched the people of *Samaria*, saying, that hee himselfe was some great man. Marke what followed, vers. 10. they gave heed unto him, from the least to the greatest: and what was the issue of that? the devill in time brought them to this, even to ascribe unto himselfe in *Simon* his instrument, the power of God, they said, *this man is the great power of God.*

Let us therefore learne, that the devill is not able to make the least creature, and so be admonished not to runne after Juglers, giving heed unto them, lest the devill get within us, even so farre, as to make us set up him in our thoughts, instead of the true God: which is the most vile and grosse kinde of idolatry that can be, and cannot chuse, but be the immediate fore-runner of Gods heavie wrath and judgements. In the next place, we are to consider the generality of the Apostles words, that all things were created by Christ: the worke of creation wrought by Christ as God, is a generall worke: it is common to vs, with all things that have a being in the world: though there be a difference between us, and other creatures under us, in quality and condition in respect of reason; yet they are the creatures of Christ as he is God, as well as we.

Doct. 2.
We must know Christ not only to be our Creator, but also to be our Redeemer and Sanctifier.

What a new creature is.

Vse.
Motives to stir us up to be created anew by Christ.

What is then our lesson hence? even this, we are not to content our selves only to know that we are the creatures of Christ as he is God, that our bodies and soules, and the members and faculties of them, are the worke of his hands, and that hee is our Creator. For that is a common benefit, extended to bruite beasts, as well as to us; they have Christ as he is God, their Creator as well as we: we are therefore never to rest till we know that he is our Redeemer and Sanctifier, and that by him we are created anew, and by him made new creatures, as the Apostle speaks, 2 Cor. 5. 17. *If any be in Christ, let him be a new creature: and he saith, that in Christ Iesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.* Gal. 6. 15. And in a word to tell you what it is to be a new creature, it is this, to have the minde, will & affections, and all the powers of the soule renewed, not in substance, but in holinesse & righteousness, and that in truth, according to the Image of God, in which we were first created.

To perswade to this, consider wee that God having given us reason, understanding, and ability above many other creatures, we are to use them, not only to consider the works of creation, and by them to see the power, wisdom, and goodnesse of God, but to have them sanctified by the Word and Spirit, in faith and love, to serve the Lord; or else we have no more comfort, by our reason and understanding, than bruite beasts by their sense and vegetation. This *David* knew well, and therefore said, *thy hands have made me and fashioned me,* Psal. 119. 73. And he doth not there rest, as contenting himselfe to be the creature of God, but addes further, *give me knowledge that I may learne thy commandments;* or else I have no more comfort by this, than the bruite beasts have by their sense.

2 Againe, if we rest in our creation that we are the creatures of Christ, we are no nearer heaven than the Oxe or Ass, for they are all the creatures of Christ.
3 Joyne to this, that we are in far worse case than the very toad or venomous serpent, if we content our selves in being the creatures of Christ, for their death is to them an end of misery, but ours is then a beginning of endlesse woe, without ease or remedy. If then we would have true comfort in our excellency above other creatures, in our reason, understanding & will; if we would be preferred before the bruite beasts in our title to the Kingdome of heaven, and not bee in worse case than the vilest creatures at our death: let us not rest in this, that we are the creatures of Christ, but labour to be made by him and in him new creatures, to be renewed according to the image of God, in true holinesse and righteousness, that so we may have true comfort both in life and death.

Come we now to the first difference of things created in respect of place in these

these words [*which are in heaven*] and that wee may proceed according to the true meaning of the Apostle, ranging all things created into one of these two places [*heaven and earth*.] Wee must know first that the word *heaven*, in proper signification is taken in Scripture three wayes: sometimes to signifie all that aeriall and elementary region which is above the globe of the earth and waters, to the lowest part or circle of heaven, wherein the Moone is placed: thus it is taken, *behold the fowles of heaven*, Matth. 6. 26. So also, *Hypocrites ye can discern the sunne and moon*, Luk. 12. 56. by the brightnesse and cloudinesse of the aire, yee can discern of the weather, Hos. 2. 21. *I will beare the heavens, and they shall beare the earth*.

Secondly, it is taken for all the celestially Orbs, wherein the Planets, the Sun, the Moone, and the rest of the fixed Starres, are placed thus: Gen. 15. 5. *Looke up now unto the heavens, and tell the starres if thou bee able to number them*, saith God to Abraham: and hence the starres are called the army or host of heaven, Jerem. 33. 22.

Thirdly, it is taken for the seat of the blessed Angels and Saints, whither Christ is ascended, and from whence he shall come to judgement: thus it is taken, where the Apostle saith, *he was taken up into the third heaven*, 2 Cor. 12. 2. Now here it is taken generally for the aire, for the starrie skie, and the seat of the blessed Angels and Saints: and by the *earth*, we are to understand the whole globe of the earth and waters, and as well the inward bowels of the earth, as the outward superficies of it. When therefore the Apostle saith, *which are in heaven, and which are in earth*, it is as if he had thus said, which are in the aire, in the starrie skie, and in the seat of the blessed Angels and Saints, and which are upon the inward parts of the earth.

Come we now to such things as may be observed from hence: first we are to marke, that the Apostle having set it downe in generall, that by Christ all things were created, and that the worke of creation wrought by Christ as God, is a generall worke, he doth not here make a stop, but he doth further amplifie this generall by the speciall differences of things, that some things created are in heaven, and some in earth, some visible, and some invisible. Whence wee may conclude, that though the worke of creation be great and generall, yet it is not confused: but is pleased God the Creator to set things created in good order, and to range them in severall places, and severall conditions: for as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 14. 33. God is the author of peace and order, and not of confusion and deformity. Confusion and such like were never made by God, but crept in by Satans malice, and mans corruption, and upon the fall came into the world as breaches and blots of Gods order set among creatures. Now wherefore did the Lord (for that is chiefly to be knowne) dispose things created into severall places and conditions? Surely, that there might not onely bee a comely proportion, and correspondencie of one creature with another among themselves; but that all might serve distinctly in their severall places and order, for the use and good of man: for (as the Lord himselfe saith, Isa. 45. 18.) *he prepared the earth, he created it not in vaine, he formed it to be inhabited*. And God said, Gen. 1. 14. *Let there be light in the firmament of heaven, to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signes and for seasons, and for dayes and years*. After the flood, Genes. 8. 22. *Hereafter seed time and harvest, and cold, and heat, and summer, and winter, and day and night shall not cease so long as the earth remaineth*. The consideration whereof should not onely lead us to see and behold the infinite wisdom of God, in making so excellent a frame as the world is, and disposing things of such variety and difference to so good use and purpose, but withall, it may serve to strengthen our dependance at all times upon the providence of God. For why? (consider it seriously) did the Lord (before any of us breathed in the world) so distinguish and designe his creatures in such comely

Interpret.

Doct. 3.

The worke of creation is great and generall, yet not confused.

Use.

The worke of creation shews the infinite wisdom of God, and the consideration of it may strengthen our dependance on Gods providence at all times.

comely order, that nothing should be superfluous or wanting, but all joyntly and every one severally should serve for our use; and will hee, now wee are brought into the world, forsake us? Certainly no, if we have hearts to rest on his providence, he will never faile nor forsake us: we have the Lords own word for it, that in quietnesse and content we should rest upon his providence, *for he hath said, I will not faile thee, neither forsake thee*, Heb. 13. 5. And it is worthy observation that we finde, Gen. 1. that before the Lord created the first man upon the earth, he made all things ready for his use: as a man that is to entertaine his friend whom he loves, he provideth all things both for necessity and pleasure: so did the Lord for man, he made the earth for him to goe upon, the heaven to cover and give light unto him, fishes, fowles, beasts, herbs, and fruits to feed and comfort him, and he put beauty, sweetnesse, colour, brightnesse and many other excellent qualities upon his creatures, to make them pleasant and delightfull unto him. Did the Lord this for our first parents, and is he any changeling? no, no, with him there is no shadow of change, he provided for Adam, and he will provide for us, if we be in Christ. Let us consider our owne comming into the world, wherein all things were ready provided & set in order before we came, we were provided of parents, friends, and many speciall comforts needfull: yea, let us but looke upon our owne composition and making, that we have bodies furnished with members for every good use: Soules endued with many excellent faculties: and learne by such testimonies of Gods love to depend on his providence.

Doct. 4.

Christ as he is God could have made the meanest creature the most glorious.

In the next place, wee are to markethat the Apostle saith, the same hand of Christ as hee is God, made the goodly and glorious creatures in heaven, and things of lesse glory and beauty, even things creeping on the face of the earth: whence it is easie to bee gathered, that if it had pleased God, he could have made the meanest creature, the most glorious, even a stone upon the ground, a starre in the skie, and a worrne, an Angell. For what was the cause the creature was made a stone, and not a starre? even the good pleasure of the Lord, nothing else: no other reason can be rendered, *The Lord is great above all Gods, and hath done whatsoever he would in heaven, and in earth, in the Sea, and in all the depths*, Psal. 145. 6. And though the words be spoken by way of similitude in the case of predestination, to illustrate and make it plaine, that we ought not to aske a reason of it, but to rest in the will and pleasure of the Lord, Rom. 9: 20 yet take them as a proper simple speech, and standing by themselves, and then they serve to silence the creature, that it ought not to demand a reason why it was made of this order or fashion, but to rest in the good pleasure of the Creator: Shall the thing formed, say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? as if he had said, it were too great boldnesse for the creature so to reason with the Creator, let it rest in his will and pleasure. The ground of this truth is, because the actuall power of God is equall to his will: his absolute power reacheth beyond his will: he by his absolute power can make of stones bread, or children to Abraham, but his actuall power reacheth no further than his will.

Note.**Use 1.**

We are not to deprave and abuse the meanest creature.

Use 2.

Christ as he is God can use the meanest & weakest creatures to over-master the strongest.

Is it so, that Christ (if it had so pleased him) could have made of the meanest creature, the most glorious? then we are to esteeme of the meanest things in the world, and not to deprave and abuse them, as wee doe many wayes, but most wickedly when we swear by them: for then as much as lieth in us, we advance them to the throne of God. It is our Saviours argument, Matth. 5. 36. that wee must not swear by our heads, because they are his creatures, and not ours, *we are not able to make one haire white or blacke*: but I will no farther stand on that. Let us by this be led forward to consider, that Christ as he is God, is able to use the meanest & weakest things in the world to over-master the strongest. As he could, in the first creation of things, have made the meanest creature the most glorious; so doubtlesse he can give power at his pleasure to the weakest,

to match and overcome the strongest. We finde in the booke of Exodus, that he dealt with hard hearted and rebellious *Pharaoh* by frogs and lice, and such like meane and contemptible creatures: it had beene as easie for the Lord when he turned dust into lice, to haue turned it into Lions, Beares, Wolves, and beasts of exceeding greatnesse, and cruell fiercenesse; but he rather chose to confound pride by weaknesse, that his power might more appeare, and to shew that he is able at his pleasure to make the weakest creature to conquer and bring downe the pride and power of the strongest. And to presse this a litte further, let us thinke of it to this purpose: and if the Lord can make such meane creatures, as frogs, lice, and flies, too strong for a mighty kingdome; what resistance then can any filly man or woman make against the Lords wrath? if they pull it upon them by their finnes: his wrath can arme all the creatures in heaven and earth against us, and give power to the least of them, to a flie, an haire, or the like, farre above any power of ours. *Who then* (as the Prophet saith, *Nahum. 1. 6.*) *can stand before his wrath, or who can abide the fiercenesse of his wrath? his wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken by him.*

Let hard hearted and impenitent sinners thinke upon it, that the Lord Jesus Christ could (if it had pleased him) have made a filly worme a glorious Angell, and he can use the meanest creature to bring downe the power of the strongest, he can arme all creatures against us. Let us therefore learne to tremble before him: shall we provoke him to anger, and not bring confusion upon our selves? he is a mighty Creator, therefore able to bring infinite punishments upon us at his pleasure. It is the exhortation of the Prophet *Amos 4. 12.* *Prepare to meet thy God oh Israel:* and he builds his exhortation upon this very ground, *for loe, bee that formeth the mountaines, and createth the winds, and declareth unto man what his thought is: which maketh the morning darknesse, and walketh upon the high places of the earth, the Lord of hosts is his name.* As if he had said, God is able to create the winds, to forme the mountaines, to alter the course of nature, to make the morning darknesse, therefore he is able to make an eternall judgement for thy confusion; bee therefore admonished to prepare to meet this mighty God. For the conclusion of this point, remember Christ his own speech, *Luk. 20. 18.* *that whosoever shall fall upon him shall be broken, and on whomsoever he shall fall, he will grinde him to powder.*

Now to the second difference of things created in respect of quality: things visible and invisible, that is to say, things corporall, bodily substances, subject to sight and other outward senses: and incorporall, such as consist not of a grosse, palpable, and visible matter, but have a pure, subtile, and spirituall substance, as Angels, and the soules of men, which are creatures really subsisting, but not to be perceived by any outward sense; that is the meaning of the Apostle. I might stand here to shew that Angels are substances: and though they be invisible and spirituall, yet they have a reall being, and have life, motion, and understanding: but I hope none amongst us are of the Sadduces minde, who said, *there was neither resurrection, neither Angell nor spirit, Act. 23. 8.* but that they were only qualities or good motions of the minde. Or that thinke (as the Libertines did) that Angels or spirits, good or bad, were nothing but good and bad successe. I will therefore goe no further than the naming of that point: and note wee from these words briefly this, that seeing the Holy Ghost made choice of this distinction of things created in respect of quality, that some are visible, and some invisible: we are therefore to hold it as a true difference of things, yea, such a distinction as cannot be confounded: the parts of it cannot be co-incident, they can never fall together. These qualities of things created (visible and invisible) can never agree to the same subject, not onely at the same time, but at severall times, though we are taught, that the bodies of true beleevers, raised up and glorified, shall be changed, *1 Cor. 15. 53.* *corruption shall put*

Interpret.

Doct. 5.

It is a true difference of things, that some are visible, and some invisible.

Object.
Answer.

on incorruption, and mortality shall put on immortality; yet neither there, nor any where doe we reade, that visible shall put on invisibility, these shall be distinct qualities of things for ever. If any oppose unto this that of our Saviour, Matth. 22. 30. *they shall be as the Angels*, and therefore invisible. That is not to keepe within the compasse of the text, but to extend the words beyond the true meaning of them. The speciall purpose of Christ in that place, was not to make knowne the qualities of the Saints raised up and glorified, but their state and condition of life, that it should not be with them as in this life, where they are married, and wives are bestowed on them in marriage.

Objection.
Answer.

If any further object, that 1 Cor 15. 44. *their bodies shall be spirituall*.

Againe, we are here to understand (*spirituall*) opposed, not to visible, but to naturall, that is, pure and free from heaviness of earthly matter, and not standing in need of naturall meanes of nourishment or sustentation by meates, drinks, sleepe, and such like, they shall be spirituall thus understood, but yet visible as the body of Christ. And to this end I note this, to shew how crosse the Papists are to this distinction made by the Holy Ghost: they make the body of Christ, which is a visible creature, invisible, and say it is in the Sacrament really present, and yet not to be seene. Againe, they make visible formes of Angels, which are spirituall substances & invisible, and not to be resembled by any outward formes. Thus they confound things distinguished plainly by the Holy Ghost.

Use.
Confutation of
the Papists.

Interpret.

Come we to the amplification of the Apostles argument by speciall instance. The Apostle here insisteth in one sort of invisible creatures, Thrones or Dominions, Principalities or Powers. Though evill Angels be sometimes thus called, as Ephes. 6. 12. yet that good Angels are here meant by the Apostle, it is agreed upon by the best Interpreters, ancient, and of latter times: and upon good ground, because so to understand the words, is consonant to the scope of the Apostle in this Epistle, which was to shew, that Christ is to be worshipped and not Angels, as the false Apostles taught, chap. 2. 18. The good Angels are called by these names, not as by titles of order and degree, as the Papists affirme, who in this point of foolish curiosity, in setting downe the orders of Angels, have gone so farre as they have lost themselves, as in maze: for though it cannot be denied but that there is order among the Angels, (order being a most excellent thing) yet that these be titles of order can never be proved. Augustine saith, what difference there is betweene these foure words, *Thrones Dominions, Principalities, Powers*: let them tell us that be able, so they prove that they tell us, for my part (saith he) I confesse I know it not: we are not then to conceive of these words, as signifying severall orders and degrees of Angels, but as set downe by way of similitude, to signifie both the glory and office of the good Angels, by whom Christ doth execute, and performe many great and wonderfull works, as it were by Kings, Rulers, Princes and Potentates: for the Apostle doth set downe these titles of dignity and office, in the abstract, for the concrete: meaning by Thrones, as it were Kings, Rulers, Princes or Potentates. Thus then we are to conceive the words of the Apostle, as if he had said, Even the good Angels were created by Christ: who are both most glorious creatures, and used by him to performe many great and wonderfull workes, by what name soever ye call them, whether ye conceive them under the name of Kings or Rulers, Princes or Potentates.

Now, here first we are to marke, that the Apostle speaking of the creation of Angels, he saith not in plaine termes, that invisible things were created by Christ, even Angels: but hee useth these borrowed speeches, *Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers*, he sets them downe by way of similitude, comparing them to the highest dignities and glories in the world, as Governours are called, Jude Epist. vers. 8. And that in the abstract, whence it followeth, that the good

good Angels are most excellent creatures, earthly Kings, Princes and Potentates in their greatest pompe and glory of their Thrones, are but shadowes of the good Angels. And for further prooffe of this, we shall finde that the Scriptures speake of them, as of the excellencie of all creatures; yea, when the greatest glory and praise belonging to any creature, is spoken of in Scripture, the speech is then taken from the glory of Angels: and when the woman of Tekoah, was to commend the wisdom and knowledge of David, she saith, *My Lord the King is even as an Angell of God, in bearing good and bad*, 2 Sam. 14. 17. Thus Manna is called *Angels food*, Psal. 78. 25. That is, most excellent food, that if Angels should need food, it were fitting for them, 1 Cor. 13. 1. *Though I should speake* (saith the Apostle) *with the tongues of men and Angels*. His meaning is, if he had the most excellent & eloquent tongue that possibly could be. Thus then the greatest glory and excellencie of any creature being set out by speech drawne from Angels, it must needs be that they are most excellent, yea, it is a part of Gods glory, to have attendance of Angels, and it shall be a part of our glory after the resurrection to be like to them, therefore they doubtlesse are most excellent creatures.

Now, how may the consideration of the excellencie of Angels profit us? Surely thus, we are thereby to be led on, to see the glory of Christ their Creator: for if these creatures be so glorious, how glorious then is he that made them? we are not to rest in the beauty & excellencie of the creature, but to rise up, and ascend by that, and from that, to the glory of the Creation: and thus must we doe in all things of any excellency. When wee see men excell in rare gifts, of beauty, strength, goodly proportion of body, in wisdom, knowledge, and such like: we are not to rest in these things, but by them must be brought to see the glory, power, and infinite wisdom of the Creatour: yea, when we finde knowledge and understanding of good things in our selves, we are not to rest upon them, but to be carried up from our knowledge and understanding, to the giver of them: for what hast thou, that thou hast not received from the Father of lights, which is a thing needfull to be urged in these dayes, wherein many men having good gifts, doe rest too much in their gifts of knowledge and understanding, as appears in the *Brownists*, *Familists*, and others: for doubtlesse, one speciall cause of their continuance in their erroneous opinions is their too much resting upon their owne knowledge: whereby, in the just judgement of God, they fall into the snare of pride and high conceit of their understanding and knowledge, and make to themselves an idoll of their owne understanding: a thing very dangerous, and hard to be cured: for he that doth rest upon his owne opinion, and though he erre, yet holds his errour for a certaine truth, by whom can he be cured? how will he submit himselfe to any mans judgement, when he takes it not to be so good as his owne? If the eye of the soule, (the understanding) wherewith it ought to see and discover the pride of it selfe: if that be full of the same pride, who then can cure it? therefore wee are to take heed, wee rest not upon our owne knowledge, and our owne understanding, lest the Lord give us up to pride, and to an high conceit of it, and so we come incurable into some erroneous opinion: but let us be carried up from our excellencie in any kind, to the Author and giver of it, and that will make us more humble in our selves, and more thankfull to God.

In that, the Apostle setteth out the good Angels by these words of similitude *Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers*. Wee are further taught, that they are as good Kings and Princes in the common-wealth, and that as good Kings and Princes are set up by Gods providence, for the good and comfort of the good and godly, and for the punishment of the wicked, to take vengeance of evill doers: so the good Angels are appointed for the good and protection of the good and godly, and to execute Gods vengeance on such as be wicked:

a point

Doct. 6.

The good Angels are most excellent creatures.

Vse.

The excellency of Angels must lead us to see the glory of Christ their Creator, and so in other things.

Note

3. R. C.

And as it is said in the Scriptures, that the good Angels are set up by Gods providence, for the good and comfort of the good and godly, and for the punishment of the wicked, to take vengeance of evill doers: so the good Angels are appointed for the good and protection of the good and godly, and to execute Gods vengeance on such as be wicked:

Doct. 7.

The good Angels are good Kings & Princes in the common-wealth.

Vse.
The power of
Angels is for
the comfort of
such as doe
well, and for
the terrour of
the wicked.

Deut. 8.
The Lord
doubling his
speech, we are
to double our
attention.

Vse 1.
The worke of
creation is se-
riously to be
considered.

a point easily proved in both the branches of it. For the first, Heb. 1. ver. 14. they are said to be ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for their sakes, which shall be heires of salvation. *The Angell of the Lord pitcheth round about them that feare him, and delivereth them,* Psal. 34. 7. For the second, we finde that they as instruments of the wrath of God destroyed Sodome and Gomorra, they plagued Egypt with the death of the first-borne, they slew *in one night, one hundred fourscore and five thousand* in Sennacheribs host, 2 King. 19. 35. Of this point we may make the same use the Apostle doth of the power of Princes, and lawfull Governours among men, *Wilt thou (saith hee) Rom. 13. 3, 4. be without feare of the power? doe well: so shalt thou have praise of the same: for he is the Minister of God for thy wealth: but if thou doe evill, feare: for he beareth not the sword for nought: for hee is the Minister of God, to take vengeance on him that doth evill.* So in this case it may be said, Wilt thou bee without feare of the power of Angels, doe well, learne to feare the Lord, and thou shalt have comfort by their power. They then rejoyce, yea, then they have a charge laid upon them by the Lord, to use their power, to watch over thee, to keepe thee, Psal. 91. 11. Yea, thou shalt finde the comfortable effect of their ministry certaine, though the manifestation of it be not ordinary: as they ministered to Christ in his temptation, agony, and resurrection, so thou shalt finde they will minister to thee in all thy troubles; yea, thou shalt finde their protection over thee, if the Lord see it good for thee, in common calamities and miseries. We reade, Ezech. 9. 4. that a marke was set on them that mourned in Jerusalem, for all the abominations that were done in that City, that they should not be swept away in the common calamity of that City: So thou being sealed by the spirit of Christ, and sprinkled in thine heart by the blood of Christ (if it be good for thee) thou shalt bee called out from the wicked: the destroying Angell shall not rouch thee, thou shalt not be swept away in a common calamity, which is a matter of excellent comfort. On the contrary, if thou be wicked and prophane and haue no care to keepe in the wayes of God: then know, the Angels have not their power in vaine, but at all times are ready to execute Gods vengeance upon thee. It followeth: *All things were created by him and for him.* These words are a repetition of the generall proposition, delivered in the beginning of this verse. For the meaning of them, onely call to minde that they are thus to be conceived: that by the substantiall power of Christ, working together with the Father and Holy Ghost, were all things that were not before, framed and made of nothing. This repetition (as others in the Scripture) is not idle or superfluous, but for speciall cause: First, to signifie that the Apostle had not spoken rashly, but advisedly. Secondly, that the point delivered, is an infallible truth, that all things indeed without exception, were made by Christ, as we have it, Ioh. 1. 3. and without was made nothing that was made. Thirdly, we are to observe and remember this as a fundamentall point of religion.

The point hence to bee observed, is this: That seeing it pleased the Holy Ghost to double his speech: it must teach us to double our attention and consideration of the thing delivered: for where the Holy Ghost hath a tongue to speake, we must have an eare to heare, and an heart to consider, and he doubling his speech for the more certainty, as the dreame was to Pharaoh, Gen. 41: 32. to signifie that the thing was established by God: our attention and consideration of it must be answerable. We are therefore not lightly to passe over, but seriously to consider the worke of creation, it is one of our Sabbath dayes duties: if we aske to what end? I answer, That we may not onely see the wisdom and power of God: but with David, bee brought to see his infinite goodnesse and mercy towards man, Psalm. 8. 3, 4. When I behold thine heavens, even the worke of thy fingers, the Moone and the Starres which thou hast ordained. What is man, that thou shouldest vouchsafe him so great mercy.

mercy, And in that the holy Ghost doth sometimes repeate the same thing.

We may further make use of it in this manner. When it pleaseth the Lord to reiterate, and againe to reiterate his threatening of iudgement, and when hee doth stirre up, and direct his Ministers often, and that with vehemency to beat upon the same sinne: we are not lightly to regard those his threatnings, and to thinke the repetition of them idle and vaine: but to consider the infallible and inevitable certainty of his wrath to come upon refractory, stubborne and hard hearted sinners: for shall the Lord speake the word, and shall not hee be as good as his word? shall hee that is Lord of heaven and earth threaten iudgements, and that againe, time after time, and many times in patience expecting our repentance, and shall not hee at length (if sinners bee not thereby moved) bring his threatned iudgements upon them? Yes certainly, they are his owne words, Levit. 26. 23. 24. that if they walke stubbornly against him, he will visit sinne upon them seven times: hee will pay them home at last. And know it for truth, that if the Lord often by his Ministers denounce iudgements against any sinne, be it drunkenesse, swearing, or any other; If men snore and sleepe in that sinne (which by the direction of Gods Spirit is often hit upon) and still goe on in a damnable course, in dulnesse of minde, and hardnesse of heart, the Lord himselfe will then start up, and revenge his owne contempt upon them, for then the sinne is growne to a ripenesse; and that is the immediate fore-runner of iudgement, and then is the sinne remediable, 2 Chron. 36. 16. It is said, ver. 15. *The Lord sent to his people by his messengers, often calling them to repentance: but they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his words, and misfeared his Prophets, untill the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, and till there was no remedy, saith the text: How often would I (saith Christ) have gathered thy children to together, as the bewgathering her chickens under her wings, and ye would not, but now your habitation shall be left desolate, Mat. 23. 37. 38.* When sinners have many times beene admonished, and never amend, then their sinnes bring iudgements without remedy: and let all unfeeling hearts thinke upon it and take heed how they tempt the Lord overlong.

Come wee to the last words, [*and for him.*] In these words is laid downe the second argument by which the Apostle proves Christ to be eternall God, because all things were made for his glory, and that is the meaning of the words, for though wee have heard it before delivered, that all things were made for man: yet we are not so to understand it, as for the glory of man, but for an inferior end of the creation, and for the glory of Christ, as he is God, and so the chiefe Lord of all things.

Christ as God is the perfection of glory in himselfe, how then can things created serve for his glory? Can they adde glory to him who is maiesty and glory it selfe?

Things created serve not to adde any thing to the essence of Christ his glory, it being infinite in himselfe, to the perfection whereof nothing can be added nor any thing detracted to make it lesse perfect: but they serve to the manifestation and declaration of that infinite glory, *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth the works of his hands.* Thus all things created serve for the glory of Christ.

In that the Apostle saith, the end of the creation of all things is for Christ himselfe, that is for Christs glory. We are taught, that the glory of God must be the highest end of all our actions: and whatsoever wee doe, wee must make his glory our principall end. And that this duty doth follow from the words of the Apostle, I make it plaine thus: It being the principall end of things created, it must also be the chiefe end of the actions of those things, or else things onely idle and not working, should have reference to Gods glory: and the Lord

L

should

V. 2.

Threatnings of iudgement against sinne repeated, must not be lightly regarded.

Note.

Object.

Answer

D. 9.

Gods glory must be the highest end of all our actions.

should have made things onely doing nothing, to serve for his glory, which is most absurd once to think: therefore our bodies and soules being made for Gods glory, all the actions of them both must tend to the same end: it is the conclusion of the Apostle agreeable to this, 1 Cor. 10. 31. *That Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever wee doe, it must be done to the glory of God.* Again, all actions must tend to some good, or else they are not good. Now the glory of God is the chiefest good, it is put for the goodnesse of God it selfe, Rom. 9. 23. and it is the whole ioy and felicity of the Saints and Angels in heaven, to glorifie God, they are so ravished with the love of it, that they never waxe weary in sounding forth the praise of God: they cease not day nor night saying, *holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and which is, and which is to come,* Revel. 4. 8.

Vse. 1.

Reproofe of those, whose labour and actions are to the dishonour of God.

Therefore it must bee the supream end of our actions, that is our duty, a duty indeed little thought on by many in the world. Many there be who are so farre from making the glory of God, the chiefe end of all their actions, as that their lives and actions are nothing else but a continuall dishonouring of the Lord: they are so loose in their lives, and so given over to follow the corrupt lusts of their owne hearts, as they cannot abide any that will not powre out themselves to the same excessse of riot, or at least allow of it: they hate none more than such as goe about to reforme them. Let such persons know, that they are like the devill and damned in hell: for it is the practise of the devill (without ceasing) to belch out blasphemie against God himselfe, and to labour to make others dishonour his name: and as they are like the devill in practise, so (without true repentance) they shall be like him in punishment: yea, their owne bodies and soules shall one day witnesse against them; for in them are imprinted such lively characters of Gods wildome, power, goodnesse and mercy, that doe so plainly preach to them the glory of God, as they cannot blot out the marke of it, in the parts of their bodies, and the powers of their soules: but being used by them in their actions, to the dishonour of his Majesty, they shall be so many witnesses against them, when the Lord Iesus shall come to judgement. Let them thinke upon that.

Vse 2.

We are to take heed of seeking our owne glory in doing of good things.

And for further use of this point, let us every one labour to practise the duty now delivered: and take wee heed that sinne doe not insinuate and creepe within our best actions, our hearing of the Word, our prayers, and giving of almes, the discharge of our publike office and function, &c. I know wee cannot but sinne in our best actions, but my meaning is, wee are to labour against the sinne that is contrary to the duty now laid before us: and that is vaine-glory when men doe not good things in simplicity of heart, aiming at Gods glory principally, but seeke their owne private glory, and aime at the applause and commendation of men, a sinne that cannot easily bee discerned. It is a branch of inward pride; I therefore leave the examination to every mans conscience, let that tell every one whether he doe good things in simplicity of heart, aiming principally at Gods glory: or whether in the doing of them he seeke his owne glory. I will labour to dissuade from that sinne: and to that purpose consider these two things.

Reason.

Against seeking our owne glory in doing good things.

First, there is no soundnesse of religion in the heart, where there is a secret seeking of a mans owne glory: that man that makes it his chiefe end of good actions: to be spoken of, and admired, doth thereby make knowne that his heart is not sound. *How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and sing not the honour that cometh of God alone,* Ioh. 5. 44.

Again, we shall finde, that though other finnes have bene suffered a long time unpunished, yet the encroaching on the right of Gods glory, ever brought present judgements. The builders of the tower of Babel were suffered to goe on in many other finnes, yet when they came to build to get them a name, they were

were confounded in their devices, Gen. 11. 4. *Nebuchadnezzar* a wicked King (no doubt) was suffered to goe on in many other finnes, yet when hee thought (with the maiesty of his person and pallace) to outface the Lord, hee became a filly and miserable beast, Dan. 4. 27. *Herod* had long vexed the Church, yet went unpunished, till taking to him selfe the glory of God, then was he eaten up of wormes, Act. 12. 23. And if any thinke these examples of an higher degree of sinne, than is the secret seeking of applause amongst men, let him know, that even that, is a robbing of God of his due honour: and the Lord is not onely carefull, but (as I may say) curious, or (as the Scripture speakes) jealous of his glory. he cannot abide it should be any way touched or impaired: surely *I will not give my glory unto another*, Isa. 48. 11. Therefore they that incroach upon it in the least measure, cannot escape the iudgement of God. If then wee would not discover the unsoundnesse of our hearts, if we would not endanger our selves, suddenly to bee overtaken by the hand of God: let us take heed wee give no place in our hearts (when we are performing good duties) to a secret seeking of our owne glory, but in sincerity ayme at Gods glory; and remember for a conclusion of this, what the Lord hath said, 1 Sam. 2. 30. *They that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be despised.*

One word more I will adde touching these words, in that all things were created for the glory of Christ Iesus, it followes upon that, that they are so to be used: for that end the Lord intended in making creatures, must bee driven at in the use of the creatures. How then can the Papists excuse themselves, for their hallowing (as they call it) but indeed charming of bread, water, salt, spittle, and such like, to make them able to confer health of body and soule: is this to use the creatures to the glory of Christ Iesus? no surely, it is a meere prophanation of the name of God, an abusing of his creatures, to the derogation of the infinite merit of the precious blood of Christ, and that is an high degree of sinne.

Verf. 17. *And he is before all things; and in him all things consist.*

IN this verse are propounded two things. First, a repetition of two generall things affirmed of Christ, verse. 15. that hee is the first borne of every creature, in these words, *And he is before all things*: then a third argument to prove Christ to be true eternall God, taken from his powerfull preservation of all things, in the words following, *and in him all things consist*. Of these words in order.

And he is before all things] These words being onely a repetition of that which before was delivered, that he is the first borne of every creature, are so to be conceived, as before I shewed when I stood upon these words, that Christ was begotten of the substance of his Father from all eternity. And now to derive hence some further point of instruction, we are to marke that the Apostle in the fifteenth verse, speaking of the eternity of Christ, sets it downe by way of similitude and borrowed speech, because (as then I noted) wee are not able to comprehend it, but by way of shadow and resemblance: now here hee delivers the same thing in more plaine termes, that *he is before all things*; to this end without question, to take away all doubtfullnesse, ambiguity, and error that might bee occasioned from the former similitude. The point I hence gather is this:

That whatsoever is necessary to be knowne and beleaved of us to salvation, is in one place of Scripture or other plainly set forth, and easily to bee understood of all them that reade diligently, marke attentively, pray heartily, and iudge humbly, wee shall finde, that where any thing (necessary to bee knowne to salvation) is delivered by trope or figure, or any thing obscurely, the same in another place is explained. To insist in one or two places, circumcision is called

Doct. 10.

All creatures must be used to the glory of God.

Vse 1.

Confutation of the Papists.

Verf. 17.

Doct. 1.

All things needfull to be knowne and beleaved to salvation, are plainly set forth in the Scripture.

the covenant, Gen. 17. 10. and in the next verse the signe of the covenant: the Paschall Lambe is called the Paschever, Exod. 12. 11. 21. and vers. 27. the sacrifice of the Lords Paschever. Christ is called a rocke, 1 Cor. 10. 4. yet a spirituall rocke by way of exposition; and so that trope in the institution of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper (so much abused by the Papists, as the ground of their transubstantiation) is expounded, both by our Saviour, and his Apostle Paul, and made plaine to them that are not wilfully blind. For when our Saviour said, *do this in remembrance of me*, and the Apostle, *as oft as yee shall eat this bread, and drinke this cup, ye show the Lords death till he come*, 1 Cor. 11. 2 6. they doe plainly declare that bread and wine bee memorials and visible signes of the body and blood of Christ.

Vse.
Scripture is
the best ex-
pounder of
Scripture.

Note.

Is it so, that every thing necessary to be knowne and beleevd to salvation, set downe obscurely in one place of Scripture, is made plaine in another? then we must needs grant that the Scripture is the best expounder of Scripture, and that wee commonly give to a man of ordinary understanding: that hee *Optimus sui interpret*, the best expounder of his owne meaning, may not bee denyed to the wilddome of God revealed in his word: we must needs grant, that the best way of expounding Scripture, is by Scripture it selfe: and that this poynt may tend to some speciall profit of every one of us: Learne we hence, that the application of one place of Scripture, must be with the consideration of another: we are so to apply one place of Scripture to our selves, as that we forget not another: for if we observe it, we shall finde that the devill doth this way strongly delude and deceive a great number in the world: he makes them not rightly apply, but hale to themselves some places of Scripture helping them forward (by their abuse of them) in their sinne with utter oblivion and forgetfulnesse of another place, that might pull them backe from their sinne. We may see this his dealing in one particular, in the sinne of presumption; men are bold to sinne, presuming on Gods mercy, and hee will furnish them with the remembrance of many comfortable places of Scripture: as *Psalm. 103. 8. the Lord is full of compassion*: and *Psalm 136. throughout, that his mercy endureth for ever*: and *Psalm 155. 9. that his mercies are over all his workes*: and makes them to entitle themselves to a number of such sentences, sounding nothing but mercy. And thus he doth carry them up as with a *Psalm* of mercy, to the highest pitch of presumption, and make them (as it were) lay violent hands on the comfort found in these places: as if it did belong to them, never remembring to apply these together, with that rule of the Apostle, *Galath. 6. 16. Setting downe to whom mercy belongs*. Wee must take heed of this manner of application of Scripture, there being a sweet harmony and consent betweene the places of Scripture: they must be expounded one by another, and applyed one with another. For if that be a truth (as indeed it is) that in comforting the distressed, the promise alone must not be applyed, but tempered with the threats of the Law, because much guile is in the heart of man, and it is exceeding deceitfull: then much more out of that case of distresse are we to apply to our selves the comfort of one place of Scripture, so as wee forget not the moderation of it by another, wherein there is either a rule, or threatening, to keepe us from presumption. We shall finde this practised by Christ himselfe, the best example for imitation. We read, *Matth. 4. 5. 6. when he was tempted, to cast himselfe downe from a pinnacle of the Temple, that temptation was backed by a comfortable place of the Psalm. 91. 11. 12. Hee will give his Angels charge over thee, and with their hands they shall lift thee up, lest at any time thou shouldest dash thy foot against a stone*. Our Saviour did not rest on the consideration of that place alleadged, and answer the divell as he might, that he plaid the devill, and left out that which made against himselfe, the limitation of the Angels charge, that they must take charge of him: not if hee should come downe headlong, but using the ordinary meanes of descending,

descending : thus hee might have answered that place alone, but to answer the devill (which is the thing we are to marke) out of the Law, which is alwayes a cooler of presumption, he said unto him; it is written againe, *T thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* Thus are wee to apply the comfort of one place of Scripture, with the remembrance of the mitigation of it by another: for otherwise, that which should be our life, will (through our corruption) become our bane, and that which should minister matter of comfort to salvation, will be a meanes of encouragement to sinne with boldnesse, to our utter ruine and destruction.

I come to the second thing, which is a third argument, proving Christ to bee God, in the words following [*and in him all things consist.*] The words are briefly thus to be conceived, that by the powerfull hand of Christ, all things created are preserved in their essence and state, and sustained in their substances, quantities, qualities, motions, and actions, so as if hee should withdraw his hand, they would all perish and come to nothing. Hence hee is said to *bear up all things by his mighty word*, Hebr. 1. 3. and to bee with his Father, as a nourisher of all things, Prou. 8. 30. For wee must not understand this, and the like places (as I have often noted) exclusively, as shutting out the providence of God the Father, and of the holy Ghost, but that hee, together with the Father, and holy Ghost, doth powerfully preserve all things. Now here, first we are to marke the argument of the Apostle,* that he proves Christ to bee true and eternall God by the worke of preservation, as before by the creation, that he is the preserver of all things, and therefore God, whence it followes, that the preservation of things in their essence and state, is by the mighty power of God: for else the argument had not beene good, that is, Christ is the preserver of all things, and therefore God, unlesse preservation be a proper and peculiar effect of the powerfull hand of God, and consider wee the ground of this given by the Apostle, 1 Pet. 4. 19. that *God is a faithfull Creatour*; hee did not onely make the heavens, and the earth, and all things in them, and so leave them as workemen leave houses, as soone as they have made them they take away their hands from them: but hee is a faithfull and carefull Creator, and doth sustaine things created, and his hand is still with the worke that hee hath made and he holds it up continually: the preservation as well as the creation of all things, is a proper effect of his power.

Hence we must learne not to rest in the meanes of our owne preservation, as meate, drinke, and such like: but wee must see, behold and acknowledge in them the powerfull hand of God to sustaine us, and that he worketh by them, and not they without him. Learne we to see in bread, *the staffe of bread*, as the Lord himselfe calles it, Levit. 26. 26. that is, the strength and power to nourish, which comes from the Lord, and is given and taken away at his pleasure: wee shall finde the Lord doth many times teach men this duty by their owne wooll experience, I meane such as are unmindefull of this duty, that when they see not God in the bread which they eat, he makes them pine away in the midst of their plenty: the meanes vouchsafed have not power to doe them good, and all, because they secretly ascribe that to the meanes, which they cannot have except the Lord blesse them: wee therefore are to learne our duty, namely this, not to rest in the meanes of our preservation, but to see and acknowledge the powerfull hand of God in them to doe us good. Now for further use of this point. Here comes a question to bee scanned, that seeing our preservation, in regard of being and state, is by the mighty power of God: and wee finde in the Scripture, that some have beene preserved in respect of body, by the powerfull hand of God extraordinarily: as *Mosis* in the Mount: *Daniel* in the Lions denne: *Eliab* forty daies and forty nights, with a course cake, and a pot of water.

Interpretation.

Dof. 2.

Preservation of all things in their essence and state is by the mighty power of God.

Use.

We must not rest in the meanes of our preservation.

Question.

The question may bee, when wee may lawfully expect the extraordinary power and providence of God for our preservation: which is a thing needfull to bee knowne, to keepe us that wee doe not at all times looke for the extraordinary power of God to preserve us, for so wee shall many times tempt the Lord.

Answer.

Answer therefore, that when ordinary meanes are wanting, and there is no way to come by them, then the faith of the true beleever may rest on the extraordinary providence of God, and we may then perswade our selves, that the Lord (if hee see it good) will send helpe extraordinarily. When the people of Israel are at the red sea, and see no way how to escape their enemies, then they may looke that the Lord will divide the sea, and give them passage thorow it: when *Daniel* is cast into the Lions denne, he may then expect Angels to come and close the Lions mouthe. The Scripture is plentiful in examples of this kinde: but on the other side, when ordinary meanes are to be had, then it is contempt of Gods ordinance and presumption not to use them, but to expect extraordinary help from heaven. When *Elisha* and his servant were alone in Dotham, and without meanes of defence, then hee might lawfully expect his garrison of Angels, 2 King. 6. 17. but verl. 32. where ordinary meanes were to be had, then he did not looke for such extraordinary helpe, but used the means offered, he shuts the doore, and bids them handle the messenger roughly. And thus the question is answered, that when ordinary meanes cannot be had, then we may looke for the extraordinary, when they may be had, we are to use them, yet so as wee rest not upon them, but see in them, and by them, the powerfull working of the Lord.

Dott. 3.
The Church of
Christ is pre-
served by his
providence in
speciall man-
ner.

Vse.
If Christ keepe
us, we neede
feare nothing.

One thing more is offered unto us from these words, and that is a matter of comfort to all true beleivers, namely this, in that all things are preserved by Christ, it cannot be but that his Church, his body is kept and preserved by his providence in speciall manner, Isa. 27. 3. the Lord saith hee keepes his vineyard, and hee will water it: and *David* found such safety and security under the speciall providence of God, as hee was not able (as it should seeme) with any words to expresse; and therefore hee useth all these metaphors, *My rocke, my castle, my fortresse, my buckler, my shield, &c.* Psal. 18. 1. 2. Now the same God is the same castle, and shield, and fortresse, and bulwarke, and deliverer from all enemies, and from the devill and his instruments, to all them, that put their trust in him for ever, Psalm. 17. 8. *David* prayed for speciall defence, *Keepe me as the apple of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings*: hee prayed (no doubt in faith, with assurance that the Lord would so keepe him, and doth so keepe all his children. Now who will not warily keepe the apple of his eye, it is the tenderest thing, and that part of the body that men are most carefull of: and even as the apple of the eye doth the Lord Iesus keepe his: If then Iesus Christ be our keeper, whom need we feare? Doe but remember that which we have in this text, *that in him all things consist*, and the motion of all things is from and by his power, though sinfull motions, as they are sinfull, are from the wicked themselves, yet as motions, they are from the Lord, and they cannot move the least finger but as they are sustained by him: why then should wee feare them? No, no, know that the hand of Christ Iesus is with thee, (thou that art a member of him) both in life and death; yea his hand shall keepe the very dust of his owne, when they are dead. Let this therefore sinke and settle into every one of our hearts, that Iesus Christ is our keeper, and it will make us love him, cleave to him, And bee of good courage in the waves of the sea of this troublesome world, and feare nothing.

Verf.

Verf. 18. *And hee is the head of the body of the Church : hee is the beginning, and the first borne of the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.*

THe Apostle having spoken in the three verses going before, of the dignity of Christ his person in respect of his deity, and so proved the sufficiency of the worke of redemption wrought by him. Now he comes to speake of his dignity, as hee is God and man by personall union; and withall teacheth by way of implication, how Gods chosen are made partakers of that redemption namely by their union and communion with Christ, that hee is their head, and they his members: the things affirmed of Christ in this verse, setting forth the dignity of Christ his person as God and man, are three.

First, that he is the head of the body of the Church.

Secondly, the beginning.

Thirdly, the first borne of the dead.

To which points of glory is added the end of them all in the last words, that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Come we to speake of these, as they are laid downe in order. *And hee is the head of the body of the Church.*] The words (*head and body*) are metaphoricall borrowed from knowne things, and doe signifie that relation that is betweene Christ and his Church, that there is the same relation betweene him and his Church, that there is betweene the head and the body; and that in many respects, that as the head and body are knit together by vermes, and by the soule, so Christ and his Church are united and knit together by the band of faith, and the spirit, as the head hath an eminency and excellency, and the body is under in place and dignity; so Christ hath an eminency and excellency above the Church, and the Church is under him in place and dignity: as the head gives naturall life, sense and motion to the body, and the body receives those things from the head; so Christ gives spirituall life and motion to the Church, and the Church receives such life and motion from Christ: and as the head doth guide, governe and defend the body, and the body is guided, governed, and defended by the head; so is it betweene Christ and his Church.

In these things specially standeth that similitude and resemblance of Christ and his Church to an head, and the members of a naturall body. And that wee may yet better conceive the meaning of the words, two questions are briefly to be answered, which serve much for the understanding of that relation, that is betweene Christ and his Church, compared to an head or body.

First, there being in Christ two natures, the question may bee in respect of which of these two is Christ the head of his Church, and united to it, and to every member.

Secondly, what manner of union it is, whereby Christ and his Church are united. For the first I answer, that Christ is the head of his Church in respect of both his natures, even whole Christ God and man is the head of his Church: for he is so the head as he is the Saviour of his Church: they are conioyned by the Apostle, Ephes. 5. 23. *Christ (saith the Apostle) is head of his Church, as the husband is the wifes head, and the same is the Saviour of his body.* Now Christ is the Saviour of his Church, not according to his divine nature only, nor only according to his humane nature, but whole Christ in his God-head, in his soule and flesh: and therefore whole Christ is the head of his Church, and the Church, and every true member of it, is united to whole Christ, yet in this order: first to the flesh and manhood of Christ, and then by that, to the Godhead, because, as ther is no union of man with God, being severed from him by sinne, but by a mediator; so is there no coniunction with the Godhead of Christ, but by his flesh

Verf. 18.

Interpretation.

Two questions.

I
2
Answer.
to the first
Question.

Note.

Answer
to the second
Question.

Doct. 1.
Christ is the
only head of
the universall
Catholike
Church.

Confutation of
the Papists.

Doct. 2.
There is a most
neere union
betweene
Christ and his
Church.

in which hee performed the chiefe works of mediation: and that for the first question.

To the second I answer, that the union whereby Christ and his Church are united, though it be a true and reall union, yet is it not naturall, as two ioyned in one nature; nor personall, as of body and soule; nor politicall, as of Prince and people, but mysticall and spirituall, by the bond of the same spirit and faith.

Now lastly, the word [*Church*] signifieth the whole number of Gods chosen, wheresoever called and sanctified: this then is the full sense and meaning of these words, as if the Apostle had said, Christ both God and man, in respect of both his natures, is after a spirituall manner, knit to all Gods elect, called and sanctified and is more eminent and excellent than they, giving spirituall life and motion unto them, and doth guide, governe and defend them.

From the words thus understood, we may first conclude, that Christ onely is the head of the universall Catholike Church: for though every King may in a good sense be called the head of the particular visible Church of his dominion, which is a body distinct from the whole Church; yet of the whole Church, being one body consisting of all the members of it, there can bee but one head, and that is Christ, because he onely is knit to Gods elect, called and sanctified by mysticall union, he only gives spirituall life and motion to all the members of the Church: yea, the Papists themselves (against whom I note this, who say, that the Pope is the head of the Church, in their annotations on Ephes. 22.) confesse that the Church in no sense can be called the body of the Pope: and therefore we may conclude, that hee cannot bee the head of the universall Church. As for their new coyned distinction of head imperiall, and ministeriall, it is not only without warrant from the word, but foolish, and doth imply a contradiction: for to be head, argueth preheminance, as saith the Apostle in the end of this verse, and to be ministeriall argueth subiection and inferiority; therefore head ministeriall can never agree to the same subject. And so I leave this point, and come to another.

In that the Apostle sets downe that relation that is betweene Christ and his Church, by this similitude that hee is an head, and the Church as a body, wee are taught that there is a most neere union and coniunction betweene Christ and his Church, even as neere as there is betweene the head of a man and his body: yea more neere; for the head of a man may be cut off, but Christ is ioyned with his members inseparably: all opposite strength and power of hell can never bee able to separate him from his Church and members. And hence it is that the word [*Christ*] is put many times for the Church of Christ, because Christ and his Church are so neerely coniointed, 1 Cor. 12. 12. *For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, which is one, though they be many, yet are but one body: even so is Christ, that is the Church of Christ as appears in the very next verse: For by one spirit are wee all baptized into one body.* Gal. 3. 16. *Now to Abraham and his seede were the promises made. Hee saith not, unto the seedes, as speaking of many; but unto thy seed, as of one which is Christ: where the word [*Christ*] signifieth not onely the head or Mediatour, God and man, but also the Church gathered and called by the preaching of the Gospell,* Ephes. 1. 23. The Church is called not only the body, but the complement of Christ. This is further manifest by another similitude used by the Apostle, namely of man & wife in marriage, that as the husband and wife in carnall marriage are united most neerely into one flesh, and are indeed till death or lawfull divorce by the bond of marriage, one flesh, even so neere, or rather neerer (because death cannot sever them) is the coniunction betweene Christ and his Church. Thus the Apostle hath taught, Eph. 4. 31. 32. where he doth apply the words concerning carnall marriage, to the coniunction betweene Christ and his

his Church, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twaine shall be one flesh: this is a great secret, but I speake concerning Christ and concerning the Church.

The poynt thus cleered, let us come to the use. First, it may serve to strengthen the faith of all true beleivers, touching their iustification by Christ his righteousness imputed unto them: for there being that neere coniunction betwene Christ and his Church, as is betwene the head and the body, it must needs be, that the graces and benefits of Christ doe truly and really belong to all his members: and what hee did as mediatour, by the covenant of grace, is truly imputed unto them, and made theirs by true faith: for what is done by the head in a naturall body, may truly be ascribed to the whole body; so what Christ did as mediatour, he being the head of the Church, is truly imputed to all his members. The Papists say, it is but a fancy of an idle braine, to hold that the righteousness of Christ and his merits are made ours by imputation, it is all one (say they) as if we should say, one man doth live by the soule of another: and yet they say, that the merit of the good worke of one member of Christ, by reason of that communion that is betwene the members, may bee communicated and applyed to another: which I speake, not onely to shew the error in the thing it selfe: for it is false to say, that there is any such power given to any, to merit for himselfe and other. But to let us see how absurd, and how forgetfull they are of their owne assertion, and let us leave them to vanish in their owne iarring and dissenting opinions, and let us learne to acknowledge it a certaine truth, and labour to bee strengthened in the perswasion of it, as grounded, on the neere union of Christ and his Church, that as many as truly beleeve in Christ, stand iust in the sight of God, by Christ his righteousness, even by his inherency, but ours given and apprehended by faith. Let that suffice for the first use.

Againe, is this a truth, that there is a most neere union betwene Christ and his members, even so neere as betwene the head and the body? then let all such as harme any member of Christ, (happily a filly man or woman in the sight of the world) let them know that the harme done resteth not upon the person harmed, but reacheth up even to Christ Iesus in heaven: as harme done to the least finger, reacheth to the head, and sometimes causeth the head to drop downe teares: so the harme that is done to any member of Christ reacheth to him. Moses saith, the enemies of the Church rose up against God, Exod. 15. 7. The Lord saith, he that toucheth his people, toucheth the apple of his eye, Zach. 2. 8. And that knowne speech of Christ from heaven, may here bee remembered, Act. 9. 4. Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? in my members, and by my members. Let this strike terror and amazement to all wicked persons, who load the members of Christ with iniuries and wrongs, in word and deed. When thou dost cast disgrace and contempt, by opprobrious tearmes, upon a filly man or woman, beleeving in Christ; thou doest it to Christ his head in heaven, and know that thou mightest as well spit in the face of Christ himselfe. A man will not suffer the least member of his body to be pinched, if he can hinder it; and shall Christ (to whom all power is given in heaven and earth) suffer any of his members, bought with so deare a price, as his owne precious blood, bee wronged, and revenge it not? No certainly, such wrongs ring in the eares of the head of the Church of Christ Iesus, and will cause him one day to come downe in flaming fire, to consume them that abuse his members. Yea it is to bee thought on and considered, that the head of the Church is such an head, as doth know not onely the wrong done to his members, but the secret intents of mischief also, and the very purpose of evil against any of them: for he is not only man, but God also, a searcher of the secret thoughts of all hearts: let not then any man thinke that he can wrong a member of Christ so secretly, as that the wrong done, shall

Vse. 1.

Strength to
our faith tou-
ching iustifica-
tion by Christ
his righteous-
nesse imputed.

Papists erre
and differ in
their owne opi-
nions.

Vse. 2.

Harme done to
any member
of Christ, rea-
cheth up to
Christ himself.

Note.

shall be smothered in the place where it is done, and never come to light: for why, it mounteth up above the Sunne, even to Christ in heaven: yea, hee sees and knowes thy malice against any of his members, lurking in the depth and bottome of thy heart, it is a corruption as old as *Caine*, to hide, cloake and shadow rankor and malice, and to thinke that it reacheth no further than a mans owne bosome: but wee are to know, that it reaching to a member of Christ, (though not in act, but onely in thought) it reacheth to Christ, and is not onely sene and knowne of him, but it toucheth him, and he hath a feeling of it, and without repentance and change of minde and affliction, he will punish it as intended against himselfe. Let this bee thought on and remembered of all those that wrong their brethren, in the secret thought of their hearts. It may be, and I make no question of it (but many men and women never thought of this) that their secret malice reached so high as heaven. Let us therefore now learne it, and for conclusion of this poynt, remember what the Lord saith to *Abraham*, Gen. 12.3. *I will blasse them that blasse thee, and curse them that curse thee*: all that truly beleeye in Christ, have him a friend to themselves, blessing them in their owne persons, and a friend blessing all that are friends to them, and a foe to all false hearts, harbouring and hatching mischief against them, which is a matter of great comfort to them, and of dreadfull terrour to all that hate them.

Dott. 3.
All the actual
members of
Christ, are in
speciall man-
ner under
Christ.

By this relation betweene Christ and his Church, compared to an head and a body, wee are further taught, that all the actual members of Christ, as many as are truly knit to him by the bond of his spirit, and faith, they are in speciall manner under Christ; yea, so as they are quickned by him, and have spiritual life communicated unto them for him, as the head doth quicken and give life to the members of the body, and governe them in speciall manner, so Christ in speciall manner doth quicken and governe his members. Wee neede not seeke farre for the prooffe of this: let us but looke backe to the last words of the verse fore-going, and consider them together with these words, and the point will easily appeare very plaine. In Christ all things generally whatsoever consist, that is, all things by his powerfull hand are preserved and sustained; his generall providence is over all creatures: but when the Apostle comes to set downe what hand and government Christ hath over his Church, hee saith (in respect of his Church) hee is as the head to his Church, hee doth guide and governe it, as the head doth the members. This is the doctrine of the Apostle, *Ephes. 1. 20, 21. 22, 23.* where speaking of the exaltation of Christ raised from the dead, and set at the right hand of his Father in heavenly places, farre above all principallities and powers, and might, and dominion: and every name that is named, not in this world onely, but also in that that is to come. He saith that all things whatsoever, yea, his very enemies, will they, nill they, are made subiect unto him, but how? under his feet: there is the manner of their subiection, and his Church also is made subiect under him, but how? as the body to the head, saith the Apostle, where wee see a manifest difference of subiection of other things, and of the Church unto Christ: and withall, as plaine a difference of that hand and government, that Christ hath over other things, and over his Church: that he hath a generall dominion over other things, and that hee governes his Church, and the members of it in speciall manner, yea, so as hee doth quicken and give life to them. The ground of this is, because there is the same spirit in Christ, and in his members: for as the Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 6. 17.* He that is ioyned unto the Lord is one spirit. The same (spirit the fountaine of life and grace) dwelling in Christ, and in his members, must needs quicken, sanctifie, and make them holy as hee is, in their measure, and as the same soule being in the head and members, doth quicken both head and members, the head as the chiefe seate of life and sence, and the body as it is capable, and every member as is fit for particular duty and function.

Now

Now this for the use of it, may serve as a ground of triall and examination, every one will be held as a member of Christ, receive the Sacrament, to scale up their union with him: but where is that conformity to Christ the head of his Church, in a measure of holiness? Where is the life of Christ conveyed from him to his members by his Spirit? Where is almost that man or that woman, that can truly say with the Apostle: *I live, yet not I, that is in the corruption of my nature: but Christ liveth in me: and in that, I now live in the flesh. I live by the faith in the sonne of God, who hath loved me, and given himself for me, Gal. 2. 20.* Can we persuade our selves that we are members of Christ, and yet live as many doe, the life of nature onely, and as they are led by the light of nature? Some thinke they are in good case, because they deale truly and iustly with all men, and live peaceably with their neighbours, things indeed commendable in themselves: and excellent if they come from a good root, yet they are such as may be in naturall men, meeke heathen men have had them: shall we then from these conclude that we are members of Christ? Shall any man thinke that hee is knit to Christ, who is so farre from being ordered by his spirit in speciall manner, as that hee is altogether guided by the inward corruption and lust of his owne heart, and by the outward temptation of the Devill; yea, sometimes doth even tempt the Devill to tempt him? It may seeme strange there should bee any so given over to the corruption of his owne heart: yet such there be too many in the world, who even tempt the Devill to tempt them, and they are such as dispose themselves to sin, such as make themselves fit for the committing of sinne, and make ready their hearts as an Oven, as saith the Prophet. *Hos. 7. 6.* For example, the drunkard makes his tongue fit for swearing, rayling, ribaldry and filthy speaking: the idle person, his body fit for uncleanness: for thus to dispose themselves to sinne, is a discovering of the inward corruption of their hearts, it is all one, as if a man should shew his money to a chiefe, watching for his prey in a dangerous place: or for a man to offer his naked breast to the stab of a deadly malicious enemy, chistling after his blood: so they offer themselves as a prey to the Devill, and uncover their corrupt hearts in the sight of the Devill, seeking such advantage to allure them to thrust them through with his dart of sinne. Now then can any man thus led by his owne corruption, and the temptation of Satan, yea, many times (as I have shewed) tempting the Devill to tempt him, persuade himselfe that he is a member of Christ? He might as well thinke that the shoes on his feet are parts of his body, it is but a fancy: we are to know it for a certaine truth, that as many as are knit unto Christ, they are governed by him in speciall manner, and hee lives in them by his spirit. And that wee may have some more speciall direction in this case, and may know when we are governed by the spirit of Christ, take these two notes of the infallible presence and habitation of his spirit in us:

First, a feeling of the masse and body of our owne corruption, with a loathing of it, and a desire to be delivered from it, as Paul saith: *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death, Rom. 7. 24.* There was in him a feeling and a loathing of his owne corruption: so is it with all them that have the same spirit, for nature never feeles corruption with dislike, but onely grace: so long as it is felt onely by nature, it is followed with delight, yea, the naturall man holds it his chiefe felicity, when he may follow the swinge of his owne corrupt heart, and nothing grieves him more, than when that is crossed by some griping of an accusing and yelling conscience.

Thy second note of the presence and habitation of the Spirit of Christ in us, is an unfained purpose of heart, to obey God in all his commandments, according to place and calling, with an inclination of heart unto those commandments. Barnabas exhorted the people of Antioch, *Act. 13. 23.* that with purpose of heart, they would cleave unto the Lords. I say an unfained purpose of heart because

Use.

Triall and examination of our selves.

Note.

Notes of the infallible presence and habitation of Christ his spirit in us.

Notes of the infallible presence and habitation of Christ his spirit in us.

because even *Pharaoh* and the most wicked in the world, sometimes when Gods hand is heavy upon them, when they are sicke or the like, they promise to amend, and request others to pray for them: but yet as the Lord himselfe complaines, *Hosea 5.4.* they will not give their minde to turne unto their God, they doe it not from their heart: when they are recovered, they forget what they promised, because they promised not in truth of heart, their promise came not out from an hatred of sinne, but rather from an hatred of the commandment of God, and a sence of their present misery. Therefore I say an unfained purpose of heart, with ready and cheerefull inclination of heart, to all holy obedience, such as was in *David*, *Psal. 119. 106.* a purpose bound with an oath and a holy covenant made to the Lord, to keepe them from starting. *I have sworn and will performe it, that I will keepe thy righteous iudgements.* By these two things found in us, we may know that we be governed by the spirit of Christ: but if these be wanting, we deceive our selves, if we thinke we are members of Christ, we have then no coniunction with Christ the head of his Church we are not branches of the true vine, but shall bee cast out as unprofitable branches, *Ioh. 15.6.* And let us tremble to thinke upon that which followeth upon this (namely) this, that as in this life, we have but a supposed union and coniunction with Christ, an union with him onely in our conceit: so in the life to come we shall have but an imaginary communion and fellowship with him, and indeed and truth a finall separation from him, his Saints and Angels: and fellowship with the devill and his Angels: they that have not Christ their head and Saviour in this life, shall have him their iudge and condemner in the life to come and they deceive themselves, who thinke they may live as the limmes of Satan, and yet die the members of Christ. The next thing we have to marke from these words, is this, that the Apostle saith, Christ is the head, not simply of the Church, but of the body of the Church. Hence wee are taught, that the members of Christ ought to have one heart, and one affection, to love as members of one and the same body, to be kinde one to another, and to make much one of another. Wee finde this argument and manner of reasoning plainly, proving the duty urged in many places of the Scripture, *Phil. 2. 1. 2.* *If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any compassion and mercy: fulfill my ioy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, and of one iudgement.* We have the same ground of exhortation, *Ephes. 4. 4.* urging this duty, that we support one another through love. Why so? *There is one body and one spirit,* saith the Apostle, it is recorded, *Act. 4. 32.* that the multitude of them that beleaved, *were of one heart, and of one soule.*

Doct. 4.
The members
of Christ ought
to have one
heart, and one
affection.

Reason.

Use.
All that call
themselves
members of
Christ, must
learne this du-
ty to be knit
together in
one heart.

The reason no doubt was this, because though they were a multitude, yet they were all one body, and it were monstrous to have two hearts in one body. This duty belongs to all that professe themselves members of Christ, and it ought to be effectually, to loyne us together in one heart and affection. Many reasons may be brought to move us to love one another, as out agreement and coniunction in one nature, country, place, habitation, law, liberty and religion which are all of great weight to move us to mutuall love: but above all, this is of greatest weight, and most effectually that wee are members of the mystical body of Christ. The very light and order of nature, teacheth the members of the same body, to love and to tender one another. *No man ever yet hated his owne flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it,* *Eph. 5. 29.* We cannot bring instance or example of any (well in his wits) that did ever hate or hurt his owne body willfully. If then the consideration of this, that wee are members of one body, move us not to love, and tenderly to affect one another, it will convince us of sinne against the light of nature, yea against the light of grace, and the supernaturall light of the holy Ghost, revealing unto us, that wee are knit together by one Spirit, one faith, one hope of salvation; yea, it will convince us of want of love

love to the Lord Jesus Christ himselfe, who thought not his owne blood too deare for us, but testified his love towards us, by shedding his blood to redeeme us, and therefore we ought to love him againe: but if we love not one another, it is a plaine evidence against us, that wee love not Christ: for he hath set over that love that he requireth of us in lieu of his love towards us, to be answered unto him in his members, he will have it seene how we love him, and esteeme his benefits by our love to his members: therefore hee saith to *Peter*, *Lovest thou me, then feed my lambs*, Joh. 21. 15. As if he had said, shew thy love to me upon them, and in doing good to them: if then wee would not be convinced in breaking the order and course of nature, of repelling the worke of grace, of quenching (as much as is in us) the supernaturall light of the Holy Ghost, of want of love to the Lord Jesus, to whom we owe our selves, our soules and bodies. Let us be stirred up to love one another, to be kinde and friendly one to another, as the members of one body. And for conclusion of this, let us remember what the Apostle hath said; if ye bite and devour one another, take heed lest yee be consumed one of another: if yee fasten your teeth one in another, as we doe when we breake out into bitter tearmes of railing and reviling one another, it is all one as if a man should bite of the flesh of his owne body, and if that be odious in nature for a man so to deale with his owne flesh, let us remember that wee are members of one body, and therefore ought to love one another, and it must bee farre from us to wrong one another in word or deed.

Now to the second thing here affirmed of Christ, setting forth the dignity of his person, as he is God and man (that he is the beginning) and for the understanding of the words, something must be supplied, the word (*beginning*) being a word of relation, having reference to something, whereof it is a beginning. Some refer it to all things, that he is the first efficient cause of all things; which is true, but that cannot so well agree to this place, because the Apostle hath spoken of it in the verse going before: but the relation of it must be to something within the compasse of this verse, either to the Church, or to the resurrection of the dead. And I take it, it may most fitly bee referred to the Church, the chosen of God, called and sanctified, because the Apostle speaks of the resurrection of the dead in the next words. The speech of the Apostle in the originall runs thus, *He is the head, &c. who is the beginning*. Thus then, (as I take it) we are to supply the second affirmation, he is the beginning of the Church, from him the Church and the chosen of God have their originall and beginning. Now the question may be, how he is the beginning of the Church?

By shedding of his blood on the Crosse, as *Eve* was framed and made of the rib that was taken out of *Adams* side: so the Church is framed and made of the blood, issuing and streaming out of the side of Christ crucified: for by his blood saith the Apostle, Ephes. 2. 13. *They which were farre off are made neare, and the chosen of God have redemption through his blood*, verse the 14. of this Chapter, And as the Author to the Hebrews saith, 10. 19. *By the blood of Christ they have entrance into the holy place*. And verse 20. *It is a new and a living way*, it hath an efficacie and power in it, quickning and giving life.

The Church was before Christ shed his blood, *ab initio mundi*, how then is the shedding of the blood of Christ the beginning of the Church.

Christ indeed shed his blood onely then, when hee was manifested in the flesh, after many years of the worlds continuance, yet his death was as effectual from the beginning of the world, as when he did hang on the Crosse: all the Patriarchs and Saints that lived before Christ, his coming in the flesh, were saved by it, as well as any other after his death. Therefore it is said, Rev. 13. 8. That he was the Lambe slaine from the beginning of the world. Thus then are we to conceive these words, that Christ is the beginning of the Church, of his blood.

M

Interpret.

Question.

Answer.

Object.

Answer.

Doct. 4.

Out of death
commeth life
to Gods cho-
sen.

blond-shed is the Church framed and quickned.

Now to the doctrine : in that Christ by shedding his blood is the beginning of the Church, we are taught thus much ; that even out of death commeth life to Gods chosen : Christ gives life unto them, not by life, but by death, which is a point that easily may be confirmed : for if we looke to the Lords manner of working, not onely in this particular, but in many others, we shall finde, that he commonly works all things in his creatures by the contrary : hee creates things that are, not of something, but of nothing : he makes light shine out of darknesse ; he brings water, not out of a fountaine, but out of an hard stony rocke. And this the Lord doth, not only in the worke of creation and preservation ; but also of the conversion of a sinner : therein it pleaseth him to work ordinarily by the preaching of the Gospell ; which is as contrary to the nature of man, as fire to water, for there is no seed of the Gospell in nature, but as the Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 2. 14. *The things of the spirit are foolishnesse unto the natural man : yet by the foolishnesse of preaching it pleaseth God to save them that believe.* 1 Cor. 1. 21. and thus doth he also in the worke of our redemption, as one saith, if we consider Christ on the Crosse, we shall see our Paradise not in heaven, but in the middest of hell ; out of his cursed death, doth he bring life and salvation to Gods chosen.

Reason.

The reason of this is, that his power might more appeare, and the worke be most to his glory, for then doth the Lord shew himselfe most powerfull, when he workes by contraries ; and then especially doth he so worke, when hee hath any excellent thing to worke to his owne glory.

Use.

Consolation
against de-
spaire in great
extremity.

And for use of this, let it be laid up as a ground of excellent and sweet comfort in every true beleeving heart : for why ? is it so that the Lord works the life and salvation of his chosen, out of that which seemes most contrary, the cursed death of the Crosse ? Then let every true beleever (upon consideration of this) be comforted and strengthened against despaire in his greatest extremity : let him remember it is the Lords wonted manner of working, to bring riches out of poverty, joy out of sorrow, mirth out of mourning, glory out of shame, life out of death, happinesse out of misery, heaven out of hell ; and that such is the Lords power, that hee works commonly by contraries, and withall, his mercy is as his power towards his children : and it will be a notable meanes to establish his heart with comfort in the greatest blast of trouble : yea, be it so, that the trouble be inward in soule and conscience, that hee feelles the terrours of God fighting against him, and the Lord shewes tokens of his anger and heaveie displeasure ; yet if ever before he truly felt the sweetnesse of Gods mercy in Christ ; the consideration of this the Lords manner of dealing, may stay him from being utterly dejected and cast downe, and may assure him, that even out of that trouble the Lord in his season will worke his greater consolation and comfort. I know it is an hard matter, thus to be comforted in a mans owne particular affliction. To have it in speculation and knowledge, that out of one contrary the Lords brings another, before speciall triall come, is no hard matter : but when the case is our owne, and our soules feeles trouble upon them, then to be perswaded that out of that trouble the Lord will bring comfort, and on that ground to be comforted, it is hard, because then reason is strong against it, and corruption will be stirring, and sometimes rise up to contradiction in the best. Wee reade, Act. 9. that *Ananias* would scarcely beleieve the Lord himselfe in this point, though indeed the case was not his owne, when the Lord told him in the eleventh verse, that out of the persecuting spirit of *Paul*, hee had wrought an holy profession, and made him (who before was a persecutor) an holy professor, and that out of such infidelity, he had brought such faith : *Ananias* would hardly beleieve it, but began to reason the matter with the Lord, vers. 13. yea, to dispute and bring arguments against it, that hee had

Note.

had heard of many, it was *Vox populi*, that he had done much evill, backed and countenanced with authority, and so he thought it impossible that Paul should be converted and brought to the faith. Thus doth reason and corruption many times stand up in opposition to this ground of comfort; that out of one contrary, the Lord worketh another, especially in a particular case of affliction. Therefore that we may be helped, and have our hearts established with comfort, in time of need upon this ground, we must further call to mind, and follow that notable rule of grace, that in case of affliction, reason and feeling must be layd aside; faith must be predominant, and rule above reason and feeling: we are not to judge of our future estate according to our present feeling, (for then we shall perswade our selves it is desperate) but according to the word and promise of God, who hath promised them to send helpe to his children, when sense tell them it is farthest off, and they are almost swallowed up of trouble. And to this purpose, looke on the example of the Saints of God in former times, Psalm. 130. 1. *Out of deepe places (saith David) have I called,* when hee was plunged into the deepes of a distressed conscience: he laid aside his reason and sense, and by his faith rested on the promise, which made him send up earnest prayer to God. When *Moses* at the red sea, as we reade, Exod. 14. was in extreme anguish, he saw present death every way, the people cried against him, verf. 11. *Hast thou brought us to die in the wilderness, because there were no graves in Egypt?* And no doubt (as *Luther* saith) he felt in his heart a mighty cry of the devil against him, saying: All this people shall this day perish, for they can escape no way, and thou shalt be found guilty of this great calamity, as the author of it, because thou hast led them out of Egypt. *Moses* in this extremity, by his faith broke through his owne sense, feeling, and apprehension, and cast himselfe by faith on the promise, and so cryed unto the Lord, with assurance that he would give him deliverance. Thus must we doe in time of our particular affliction: we must lay aside reason and sense, and by faith rest on the promise of God: and then this ground of comfort, that out of one contrary the Lord can fetch another, will be truly comfortable, and we shall be fully perswaded of the truth of it, that out of our particular affliction, the Lord will worke our speciall consolation, and we shall be strengthened against despaire in our greatest extremities. A second thing offered from these words, is this: In that Christ is the beginning of his Church by the shedding of his blood, and the Church beginneth at the Crosse of Christ.

We are hence further taught, that every true member of the Church must thence derive and fetch his beginning, even the beginning of his spiriual life and salvation: he must be able to say, he hath the beginning of his life and salvation from the blood of Christ, in the very act of the shedding of it.

How is that to be done, may some say? Answer in the words of the Apostle, Rom. 6. 1. *by being dead in Christ.* And Gal. 2. 19. *by being crucified with Christ,* and that is done by beleeving, not only that Christ died for him, and by apprehending the merit of his death, but by spreading himselfe upon the Crosse of Christ, and beleeving that himselfe was crucified with Christ, and so feeling the power of his death to kill sin in him: a point of faith not knowne to many in the world: it is a subtlety, and sleight of the devil to blind-fold men in this case, to make them content themselves with a conceit, (for indeed it is no true faith, but a fancie) that they have true comfort in Christ, if they beleeve, or rather thinke that Christ was crucified for them, and yet never beleeve that they were crucified with him: we must know, that this is not sufficient, this is not to goe to the first ground of true comfort, this is to take hold of that which happily belongs not unto us, namely, the merit of Christ his death, which appertaineth to none but to his members crucified with him. If we would find true comfort in Christ, we must not rest in the fruit

A rule to bee followed in case of affliction.

David.

Moses.

Doct. 6.

Every true member of the Church must fetch the beginning of life and salvation from the Crosse of Christ.

Quest.

Ans.

Vs.

Wee must therefore finde our selves crucified with.

and merit of his death, but goe to the very root of comfort, the blood of Christ streaming out of his body on the Crosse, and there finde our selves crucified with him.

Question.

Answer.

If you aske how a man shall know that he is crucified with Christ?

The Apostle hath taught us, Rom. 6. 6, 7. *When the old man, that is, our naturall corruption, is mortified by the power of Christ his death, as a man executed and put to death, ceaseth from thefts, murders, treasons, and the like: so if thou bee crucified with Christ, thou shalt finde thy selfe to cease from thy old finnes and corruptions.* Let this ever bee the ground of our comfort in Christ, that wee are crucified with him: even a wicked reprobate may in his conceit pull to himselfe the merit of Christ, and please himselfe with a deceiving comfort; but he is never able to goe thus far, to find himselfe crucified with Christ, fetch the beginning of his comfort from the very body of Christ bleeding on the Crosse. If then thou wouldest goe further, and fetch thy comfort in Christ, from the very first ground and beginning of true comfort: thou must derive it from the side of Christ upon the Crosse, and finde thy selfe a member of that body, I meane the Church, that issued out of the side of Christ, and was framed of his blood, that is, thou must finde thy selfe crucified with Christ.

Doct. 7.

The blood of Christ is a most precious thing.

Vse.

Wee are to esteeme the blood of Christ most precious unto us.

One thing more wee may gather from these words, (namely this) that the blood of Christ is a most precious thing, it is here made the seed of the Church, from whence the Church takes her beginning, it is the blood of God, so called, Act. 20. 28. it is the price of redemption expiatory, and cleansing from sinne; and wee must learne so to esteeme the blood of Christ: as it is in it selfe precious, so let us account it precious unto us. There bee some that count the blood of Christ as a common thing; and they are such as make sinne common, that commit sinne so ordinarily, that Christ his side must still runne when they have committed any sinne, and are washed from that, and come to the Sacrament to seale up their faith in the blood of Christ, they commit the same againe, and have need of his blood to runne againe: they that make an account of sinne, they make no account of the precious blood of Christ: and let them know, it is a step to that fearfull sin, spoken of, Heb. 10. 29, of *treading under foot the Sonnes of God, and counting the blood of the Testament as an unholy thing.*

And let us remember one thing further, that if we hold the blood of Christ precious unto us, then wee ought to have a serious and continued meditation of it, yea, oftentimes a solemne remembrance of it, by receiving the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ. The Jewes were to eat unleavened bread seven dayes together, Exod. 12. 15. and shall wee thinke that a short and perfunctory remembrance of the body and blood of Christ onely for fashion at Easter, or once in a yeare, enough for a Christian man or woman? no, carry another care with thee, or else be assured it will be easier for a Jew, than for thee at the day of judgement.

Interpret.
Christ called the first borne of the dead in two respects.

Now to the third thing affirmed of Christ, setting out the dignity of his person as he is God and man, that *he is the first borne of the dead.* The forme of speech, *first borne*, as I shewed, vers. 15. is Metaphoricall: the Apostle thus speaks by way of resemblance to the first borne in the old Testament. Now Christ is called the first borne, with a reference *to the dead*, in a double respect.

First, because he was the first that did rise from death to life eternall, though wee read that *Lazarus* and many more rose from the dead before Christ, yet they rose to live a mortall life, and to die againe: but Christ was the first that rose to live for ever, and never to die againe, Rom. 6. 9.

Secondly, by vertue of his resurrection, he is the cause of the resurrection of all his members, as the first borne among the Jewes, did communicate his good

good things to his brethren, so Christ the first borne among many brethren, Rom. 8. 29. doth communicate the power of his resurrection to his brethren: hence he is said to be the first fruits of them that slept, 1 Cor. 15. 20. that as the first fruits among the Jewes offered to God, were not onely sanctified themselves, but did also sanctifie the rest of their crop: so Christ rising from the dead, hath not onely made holy his owne resurrection, but sanctified also the faithfull to an happy and joyfull resurrection.

Some may say, the wicked also shall rise from the dead by the power of Christ.

It is true indeed, but not by the benefit and vertue of his resurrection, which is ever saving, sweet, comfortable, and belongs onely to his members: but by his power as he is God, and a judge by vertue and necessity of that sanction added to that commandement, Genes. 2. 17. *Quo die comederis*: In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die the death: for that decree comprehends not onely death temporall, but eternall: therefore the wicked must needs rise to condemnation: that their bodies may be punished with their soule, yet by the power of Christ, as he is God, and not by vertue of his resurrection; he by vertue of his resurrection, is the cause of the resurrection of his members only. This then is the meaning of the Apostle, that Christ was the first that did rise from the dead to life eternall, and by vertue of his resurrection, he is the cause of the resurrection of all his members.

Now here we are to observe, that the Apostle saith not, Christ is the first that did rise from the dead: but that he is the first borne of the dead. Which forme of speech doth give us this instruction; that the earth, the sea, or any other place that now hold any of the bodies of the Saints departed, shall not hold them for ever: it is but as the womb of a fruitfull mother: as the earth brought forth the body of Christ the first borne: so in the time that the Lord hath appointed, even at the consummation of all things it shall bring forth the bodies of the Saints, as a mother doth her childe (of whom she travels) in due season: the bodies of the Saints buried in the dust, or in any other place, shall be yeilded up, and shall rise againe at the time the Lord hath appointed. Wee finde that the Holy Ghost useth this manner of speaking, comparing the resurrection to a birth or bringing forth, in many places of Scripture: wee have it in the same words that here are used, that Christ is the first begotten of the dead, Rev. 1. 5. and Paul in his Sermon to the people of Antioch, doth apply that of the Psalmist (*Thou art my Sonne, this day have I begotten thee*) properly spoken of the eternall generation of Christ, as he is God, to his resurrection, and brings it to prove his resurrection: God saith he, verf. 33. hath fulfilled his promise to us, in that he raised up Jesus, even as it is written in the second Psalm, *Thou art my Sonne, this day have I begotten thee*, Luk. 20. 35. the Saints raised from the dead, are called the children of the resurrection. Those & the like places doe plainly prove the point delivered, that the earth, the sea, or any other place, shall one day (even at the day of judgement) bring forth, or as the Prophet speaks, cast out the dead, Isa. 26. 19. as we have it in vision, *the Sea gave up her dead which were in her, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them*, Rev. 20. 13.

Reasons of these are many: it is grounded on the truth of the Word of God, wherein reward is promised to the good and godly, and punishment threatened to the wicked and ungodly.

Upon the justice of God, which ever goes hand in hand with his truth; that whatsoever is spoken in his Word, the equity of his justice doth require the accomplishment of it: upon his mercy promised in the covenant of grace, wherein he covenanteth with his children to be their God for ever: upon his Almighty power: all these are as so many pillars bearing up his truth, that the dead bodies of the Saints shall one day rise againe, and bee brought out of the

Answer.

Objection.

Doct. 6.

The places that now hold the bodies of the Saints departed, shall not hold them for ever.

Act. 13.

Reason 1.

Reason 2.

3

4

Use.

That the dead
(shall rise again,
is a ground of
great comfort
to Gods chil-
dren.

Wee must la-
bour to bee
assured of our
resurrection.

Note.

Note.

the earth, sea, or any other place, as out of the wombe of a fruitfull mother, a matter (for the use of it) of exceeding great comfort, yea, the very complement and full end of all the sweet and comfortable promises of God, made to his children. This was that which held up *Iob's* heart in the midst of his affliction, *Job 19. 25. I am sure that my Redeemer liveth, &c.* Now then, that every one of us may have profit and sound comfort by this doctrine of the resurrection, so comfortable in it selfe, we must not content our selves with the bare and generall knowledge of it. Some their bee that make knowne by their lives, their wilfull and affected ignorance, or rather deniall of this in the generall, and shew that they hold the position of the sensuall Epicure: Let us eat and drinke, for to morrow we shall die, and there is an end of all. But as many of us as are better affected, and hold it an Article of our faith, must not content our selves to hold the truth of that Article of the resurrection of the body; but we must labour to be assured, that wee our selves shall have a joyfull resurrection, and be raised up at the last day, by vertue of the resurrection of Christ Jesus, the first borne of the dead. How is that to be done, may some say? The Holy Ghost hath taught us, *Rev. 10. 6. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, for on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be the Priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reigne with him.* There is a double resurrection, not of the body, as *Chiliasists*, or *Millenarians* dreamed. The bodies of all, both good and bad, shall rise at once, there shall be but one resurrection of the body; but there is a first resurrection before the last and generall resurrection, in the time of this life, and that is in the soule, when the soule is raised from the death of sinne, to the life of righteousness: and they that will be partakers of the second with comfort, must have their part in this first: for the truth is, both the first and the second, as it is comfortable, are proper fruits and effects of the resurrection of Christ. Christ by his rising from the dead, put away his naturall life, which he received with our nature from *Adam* without sinne, and he took to him a spirituall life, as the Apostle saith in generall, *1 Cor. 15. 44. the body is sowne a naturall body, and is raised a spirituall body*: and so Christ the head being raised up and quickned with spirituall life, it is not possible that he should suffer any of his members to remaine in the death of sinne, there must needs be a similitude betweene Christ and his members. Let no man then please himselfe with a bare knowledge or generall faith in the Article of the resurrection: if any will finde true comfort in his knowledge of the comfortable doctrine of the resurrection, he must fetch his comfort from this ground, that hee knowes Christ, and the vertue of his resurrection, as the Apostle saith, *Philip. 3. 10. that he hath an experimentall knowledge, a knowledge & an experience of the power of Christ his resurrection, raising him up from the death of sinne, to newnesse of life.* Whosoever builds not his comfort (gathered from the Article of the resurrection) upon this ground, deceives himselfe: it is but as an hungry man dreames, as the Prophet speaks, *Isa. 29. 8. Hee dreames but eateth, and when he awaketh, his soule is empty: or like a thirsty man dreameth, and when he is drinking, and when he awaketh, behold hee is faint, and his soule longeth.* So hee that falsly receives comfort from the doctrine of the resurrection, when the time of refreshing shall come, *Act. 3. 19. at the day of refreshing, shall finde his soule empty of all true comfort*: yea, I dare be bold to tell him, that the preaching of the Word, his profession of faith, especially of this Article of the resurrection, shall not be (as the Apostle doth inferre upon the deniall of it, *1 Cor. 15. 14.*) an idle, empty, and vaine thing, that followeth, if there were no resurrection at all: but there being a resurrection, and hee holding and confessing a resurrection of the body, and thereby falsly concluding comfort; the preaching of the Word, his owne profession, and his holding of that Article as a truth, shall stand up in judgement, and plead against him at the day of judgement,

judgement: and for concluſion of this, I may truly inferre it by the rule of contraries: If on him that hath his part in the firſt reſurrection, the ſecond death hath no power; then over him that hath not his part in it, it ſhall have power, the torments of hell ſhall be powerfull, and prevaile over his body and ſoule for ever.

Come we to another thing offered from theſe words, and that is this: Wee are to marke that Chriſt is here ſaid to ſtand in relation to the dead, as their firſt borne brother: hee is not onely the firſt borne of many brethren as they are living, but the firſt borne of them as they are dead: whence it followeth, that even the dead bodies of beleevers, whatſoever they bee, whether in the earth, in the ſea, or in any other place, are ſtill the members of Chriſt, and are ſtill knit to Chriſt. And for further light to this point, marke what the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 Theſ. 4. 14. *that beleevers departed ſleepe in Jeſus.* And Rom. 8. 38. *whether we live or die, we are ſtill the Lords.*

The reaſons of this are two.

First, there is an inſeparable and perpetuall union between Chriſt and every true beleever, not onely in regard of ſoule, but of body: 1 Cor. 6. 15. *Know you not that your bodies are the members of Chriſt: thy body once knit to Chriſt, ſo continues for ever.*

Secondly, becauſe of Gods everlaſting covenant of grace, made with his children, that he will be their God for ever, is not onely made in regard of their ſoules, but of their bodies alſo, even of the whole man. When God ſaith, I am the God of *Abraham*; his meaning is not that hee is God of *Abraham*'s ſoule only, but alſo of his body: therefore the bodies of beleevers, although they be dead and rotten, yet they are ſtill within the covenant and members of Chriſt.

Some may object againſt this, that our Saviour ſaith, Matth. 22. 32. *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.*

God is not the God of the dead in the ſenſe and meaning of the Sadducees, that is, ſo dead as never to riſe againe, for they denied the reſurrection: but he is the God of *Abraham* being dead in body to be raiſed up againe: for he is a God of mercy and of life it ſelfe, and therefore will in time reſtore the dead bodies of his Saints to life againe: and that is the meaning of our Saviour in that place. We ſee then the point proved.

For uſe of it, it is a point of excellent comfort; let every true beleever treaſure it up in the cloſet of a good heart as a precious jewel.

Are the dead bodies of beleevers within the covenant? is God even when they are dead ſtill their God according to the covenant? is hee a friend unto them, not onely in life, but after death, even to their dead bodies, that their infernall enemies ſhall never hurt them? though they be turned to duſt, and conſumed, yet ſtill doth his hand ſtill hold and keepe them, in time to reſtore them? then let the comfort of this be mingled with faith in every one of our hearts, and we ſhall finde it will ſtand by us and comfort us, when wee are gasping for breath on our death-beds, and arme us againſt the feare of death, and the horror of the grave. Marke (I beſeech you) how *David* comforted himſelfe, when he ſaw nothing but preſent death before him, 1 Sam. 30. 6. *David comforted himſelfe* (ſaith the text) *in the Lord his God*. Mark the words, they are full of weight, together with the apprehenſion of death, as he thought inevitable, he did apprehend the mercy of the Lord in the covenant, that even in death he was ſtill his merciful God, and that death could not ſever him from his God: ſo if the truth now delivered be ſetled in our hearts, (that even the dead bodies of beleevers are within the covenant) it will likewiſe miniſter matter of ſweet comfort in the very pangs of death: we being fully perſwaded with the Apoſtle, Rom. 8. 38, that not death it ſelfe can ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord. Why then ſhould we feare the ſtroke of death, or the horror of the grave?

Laſt

Doll. 3.

The dead bodies of true beleevers are ſtill the members of Chriſt.

Reason 2.

1

2

Object.

Anſw.

Uſe.

Conſolation to every true beleever.

Confutation
of a Popish
cavill.

Interpreta-
tion.

Object.

Answer.

Rom. 14.9.

Doct. 10.
It is a preroga-
tive of Christ
Jesus to be
Lord of quicke
and dead.

Vse.
Confutation
of the Popes
supereminent
power.

Last of all, observe with me here against a foolish cavill of the Papists, that the Apostle calls Saints departed, dead men: the Papists take exception against us, that wee call Saints departed, dead men, when we disprove invocation of Saints departed, and they say, we disdainfully call the triumphant Saints in heaven, dead men, as if they had no credit with God, nor any care or compassion of men: they may here see we speake no otherwise than the Holy Ghost hath taught us, calling them dead men, not in disdain (as they charge us) but as the holy Ghost doth. As for their credit with God, and care of men, we doubt not of it, but yet we deny them to be Mediators betweene God and us, that is dishonourable to the perfect mediation of Christ Jesus.

Now to the end of these three things affirmed by Christ: and the end of them is in the last words. [*That in all things he might have the preeminence.*] By the word *preeminence*, we are to understand, Lordship, Rule and Dominion: and for the extent and largeness of Christ his rule and dominion here spoken of, it is said to be in all things. These words are diversly expounded; but the exposition most consonant to the context, and consenting with other places of Scripture, I take to be this; that Christ hath rule and dominion over all reasonable creatures, both quicke and dead: and for this, we have warrant from a parallel, and like place, Rom. 14.9. where the Apostle saith, *that Christ therefore died, and rose againe, and revived, that hee might bee Lord both of the dead and quicke: that place may serve as a fit commentary and exposition upon these words.*

Yet here a scruple and doubt may haply arise. Some may say, Was not Christ Lord of quicke and dead before his death, he is God equall to his Father, and absolute and soveraigne Lord of all, from all eternity?

As he is God, and according to his divine nature, he is a Lord over us before his death, because we are all made by him, and whatsoever wee have, we have from him: but as he is man, hee obtained dominion over quicke and dead, by his death and resurrection: as Saint Peter saith in his Sermon, Act. 2. 36. *that after his resurrection, God made him Lord and Christ: because as man, he received dominion and Lordship from the Father, which he had not before: and in this respect Christ himselfe saith, Matth. 28. 18. All power is now given unto me in heaven and in earth: and that is the meaning of the Apostle, when hee saith, Christ therefore died, and rose againe, and revived, that hee might bee Lord both of the dead and quicke.* And so the words in this place are thus to be conceived, that over all, both quicke and dead, hee might have Lordship and dominion.

From the words thus understood, observe wee in a word, that it is a prerogative of Christ Jesus, to be Lord of quicke and dead. How then can the Papists defend their Popes supereminent power? That fulnesse of power they say the Pope hath over the soules of men departed (as they say) in Purgatory, to reclaime, or to loose them, from thence at his pleasure, and to open or to shut heaven to whom he will. Not to say any thing of the error of the place, it being but a fable, how can they maintaine that power of their Pope, without incroaching upon the prerogative royall of Christ Jesus, who is the soveraigne Lord of quicke and dead, who hath the keyes of hell and death? Revel. 1. 18. They allege, that he doth it by vertue of his commission, by power committed unto him, as Christ his Deputy and spirituall Magistrate: but that is as full of doubt as the former, and a taking of that for granted, which cannot be proved: they must first prove that the Pope received such power (which they cannot) before thence they conclude, that which they inferre vpon it, or else they build on the sand: let it suffice only to have pointed at this.

That which wee are to marke, as a ground of more profitable instruction, is this: the Apostle saith not, Christ is the head, &c. that he might be Lord over all

all both quicke and dead, but that hee might have preeminence over them: whence ariseth this conclusion.

That Christ is then Lord over all, when in all hee hath preeminence: or more speciall thus; then is Christ our Lord, when he is not only known by the title, but when he hath preeminence over us, when his power ruling us, (namely) the power of his spirit and grace is more eminent, and doth shew it selfe above any other power, either within or without us: when his power of grace hath preeminence, and prevails over the inward strength of our corruption, and over any outward power drawing us to sinne; then is Christ our Lord. For as wee know in civill matters, he is not a Sovereigne and chiefe Governour, who hath any over-ruling and higher power above him: so Christ is not our Sovereigne Lord, if any other power ruling in us, be above or equall to his. Himselfe hath taught us, that he is then our Lord, when he over-rules the strength that doth stand in opposition against him, Luk. 11. 22. Whensoever hee roles, hee is stronger than the strong man armed, holding possession: hee comes upon him and overcommeth him: he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth the spoiles. Hence it is that in the Epistle of *Jude*, verse the fourth, he is said to be Lord & Master, or Ruler: for so the words are in the originall, which deny that only Ruler, who is God and our Lord *Iesus Christ*: these two are put together, to signifie that where Christ is a Lord, he is a ruling Lord, he hath Sovereignty and preeminence.

I need no further to stand to prove the point: but yet for more speciall direction, some may happily desire to be enformed, how they shall know when the grace of Christ hath preeminence, and is more eminent than their corruption, or any other thing: for herein many are deluded and deceive themselves, thinking that the grace of Christ hath preeminence, and is predominant in them, when they have only that grace, which is common to them with meere naturall men, I mean power restraining them from grosse sins, serving only to leave them without excuse. For our direction therefore in this case, we are to know that when the grace of Christ hath preeminence in us, when it is powerfull not only to retrain from evill, and to order the outward conversation to some temporary conformity to the Word of God, but when it is powerfull in good things, and in good actions, especially of the immediate worship and service of God, and that in a double respect.

First, making us to doe good things willingly, cheerfully, and not of constraint, as we are compelled by law, either of God or man: but even so, as if there were no law to compell us for the preaching of the Gospel minisreth the spirit, saith the Apostle, Gal. 3. 5. and the spirit of Christ makes the people of God a free and a voluntary people, serving God, not of constraint, but willingly, Psal. 110. 3. The Psalmist saith, *I by people shall come willingly: the time of assembling shall be in holy beauty.*

Secondly, making us doe good things in sincere obedience to the commandement of God, and to the glory of Christ *Iesus*, that the glorious Name of Christ may be magnified in us, and by us in all good duties, Phil. 1. 20. this was Pauls hearty desire; *As they heartily hope, and hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all confidence, at all times, so now Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death.*

By these two things found in us, we may know that the grace of Christ hath preeminence in us: and let us hereby try & examine our owne selves, whether indeed Christ be our Lord, as we professe, or no. We hold it an article of our faith, that wee beleve in *Iesus Christ* our Lord: now if Christ be our Lord, not in title onely, but in truth; then hath he preeminence; he prevails by his grace over the inward corruptions of our hearts: I leave the examination to every mans conscience: yet we must know, that this is a duty incumbent & ly-

Doct. 11.

Then is Christ our Lord when he hath preeminence over us.

Quest.

Answ.

Vse.

Triall of our selves, whether Christ be our Lord or no.

ing upon us, that as we professe Christ our Lord, so we ought to finde the grace of Christ powerfull in us. And that this is not a thing arbitrary or indifferent, and left to us at pleasure, but a matter of necessity: consider we these things.

First, the Apostle hath said, 2 Cor. 4. 3. *If the Gospell bee hid, it is hid to them that are lost*: so certainly much more, if Christ the matter and substance of the Gospell be hid, if hee doe not appeare, and shew himselfe predominant and powerfull by his grace in our hearts, it is more than a probable argument of perdition.

Againe, to professe Christ to be our Lord, and not to finde his grace powerfull in us, is made by the Apostle, the knitting up of many great finnes in one bundle, 2 Tim. 3. 5. The Apostle having spoken of many grosse finnes, he thrust up all in this, *that they have a shew of godlinesse, but have denied the power thereof*. To pretend Christ to be our Lord, and not to finde his grace powerfull over the corruption of our hearts, it containes the guiltinesse of many finnes, yea, at the day of judgement it will adde weight to the guiltinesse of other finnes: for then a professor of Christ being found an adulterer, or a drunkard, shall be challenged and condemned not onely for his whoredome and drunkenesse, but for the abuse of his profession: his counterfeit profession of religion, his profession of Christ a Lord (yet weake & without power to over-master his corruption) shall aggravate and adde weight to the burthen of his sinne, and presse him downe to deeper condemnation.

If then we would not scale it up to ourselves that we are such as are appointed to everlasting perdition: if wee would not clothe our other finnes (odious enough in themselves) with more guiltinesse, and make them stand with more foule and ugly faces in the sight of God, his Angels and Saints at the day of judgement: then let us learne it to be a matter of necessity, that as we professe Christ our Lord, so we are to finde his grace powerfull over us, making us cheerfull in all good duties, and to good things in sincere obedience to the commandments of God, and so as the glorious Name of Christ may be magnified.

Observe one thing further, the Apostles doctrine of our union with Christ, and of receiving life from him, it ends in this, that Christ might have the preeminence: whence it followeth, in our profession of the Gospell, touching justification, sanctification, resurrection, and all things pertaining to life and salvation, to come from Christ, we ought to seeke nothing lesse than our owne glory. In the doctrine of the Gospell all things end in the honour and glory of Christ, that he might have the preeminence in all things.

And againe, the Gospell sets forth unto us heavenly and eternall things, not deserved by us, but given of the merite grace and goodnesse of God: therefore in professing the Gospell wee are not to seeke our owne glory. And let every true beleever make this use of it, when any gift or grace of Christ in him is magnified, let him returne the glory to the right owner, Jesus Christ. If thou be praised for any gift, grace, or good worke, know it is not thou that art praised for any gift, grace, or good worke, but Christ in thee, to whom all honour and praise is due: he is the head, the beginning, the author and the worker of all good gifts: therefore in every good thing commended in thee, must wee have the preeminence: it is an encroaching upon his right, to take a part of the glory to himselfe.

Ver. 19. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulnesse dwell.

The words of this verse, as they have reference to that which is immediately premised, are a prooffe of Christ his preeminence in all things: but they may more fully be conceived, as standing in relation to the Apostles general proposition laid downe in many verses.

Dott. 12.

In our profession of all things to come from Christ touching life and salvation, wee are to seeke nothing lesse than our own glory.

Use.

Wee are to yeeld to Christ the glory of every gift and grace that is in us.

That saluati on comes unto us from God the Father, by his Sonne Iesus Christ.

And then they containe a second reason, to prove Christ his sufficiencie to redeeme us, and the argument is from the eternall decree, and good pleasure of his Father, that he had so decreed, that Christ should be a sufficient Redeemer: which is propounded under the matter of his sufficiencie, (namely) all fulnesse dwelling in him, that it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulnesse dwell; and therefore he is a sufficient Redeemer: and this is the connexion & generall scope of the Apostle in these words. We finde the sentence in the originall thus laid downe, for it pleased that in him: the word (father) is not expressed, but yet that word that is here rendred (pleased) being the same word that is used by the Evangelists, Matth. 3. 17. to signifie and reveale the good pleasure of the Father, it may well be referred to the eternall decree of God the Father, and the sentence thus made up (*it pleased the Father*) that is to say, it was the decree and good pleasure of the Father, from all eternity (*all fulnesse*) by fulnesse we are to understand the fulnesse of the God-head spoken of, chap. 9. because that is not really communicated to us, but certaine finite and created effects of it. And the Apostle here speaks of such fulnesse as dwelling in Christ the head, is communicated to the members, neither that fulnesse spoken of, Ephes. 1. 23. for by that is meant the Church: but the fulnesse of grace and merit, according to that, Joh. 1. 14, 16. verses: *The Word was made flesh, &c.* and (*of his fulnesse have all wee received grace for grace, &c.*) The Apostle here proves the sufficiencie of the work of redemption wrought by Christ, and that by the sufficiencie and perfection of merit to life eternall. Thus then wee are to understand the words, that it was the good pleasure of God the Father, that in Christ should dwell all fulnesse and perfection of grace and merit to life eternall.

Interpret.

Now here much might bee spoken of the necessity of Gods eternall decree, which is the force of the Apostles argument, that the Father decreed it in his eternall counsell, that Christ should bee a perfect Redeemer: and therefore it must needs come to passe. And likewise here we might speake of the contingent and necessary coming to passe of things, of the necessity of coaction, and infallibility, but I passe by these things.

The first thing we are to marke is, that it pleased God to appoint the fulnesse that should be in his owne Sonne, for he gave not his spirit to him by measure, Joh. 3. 34. Wee may inferre upon it a generall conclusion, that the Lord hath appointed every mans measure of gifts, that he will in time bestow upon him of whatsoever, whether inward or outward: for his will appointing and disposing of all other things, it may not be excluded from the appointment and disposition of the measure of gifts he vouchsafeth to every one. To insist in one particular in stead of many, the Lord hath appointed every mans measure of food and rayment: and therefore Agur, Pro. 30. 8. prayed that the Lord would feed him with food convenient, or (as the words are to be understood) with bread of his allowance, statute, and appointment, with that bread which God in his counsell had allowed and appointed for him, whereby the way, we see warrant for that manner of prayer which is with condition, with reference, and regard of Gods secret will and appointment, that we may lawfully, and indeed that we ought (though some thinke the contrary) to aske temporary good things, with condition of Gods will, if it may stand with the good will of God, that he would grant them unto us: (but that by the way.)

Now for the use of this, that every man hath his portion of gifts at the Lords appointment, let every man hence learne to be contented with his measure, be it never so small: for why? it is appointed of the Lord, and he in his wisdom knoweth what is meet and necessary for every one: and if we be not content with our measure vouchsafed, we take upon us to describe to the Lord, and we determine

Doct. 1.

The Lord hath appointed every mans measure of gifts, that he would in time bestow upon him.

Use.

Every one must bee content with his owne measure of good things vouchsafed unto him.

Two doubts
moved and an-
swered.

1 Doubt.

Answer.

2 Question or
Doubt.

Objection.

Answer.

Doct. 4.

Fulnesse of
grace is onely
found in the
person of
Christ.

Note.

determine of things needfull for us by a leaden rule, even our owne blinde, erring and deceiving judgement, which is not able to discerne what is fit and necessary. I might urge this by many reasons, but I spake of it in the beginning of this Chapter, only now I will adde the solution & answering of two doubts and questions that may be occasioned from the duty delivered.

First, it may be demanded (seeing we are to be content with that portion God hath cut out for us, in his eternall decree, for the supplying of our wants) whether it be lawfull to pray against poverty, sicknesse, adversities and wants, or no: it may seeme we are rather to pray for *S. Pauls* gift, *Phil. 4. 11, 12.*

Answer. First the proper place of contentation, is after the use of the meanes (namely) labour, prayer, and therefore prayer against poverty, sicknesse, adversities and wants, doth not crosse contentation, they may well stand together. Again, we must know that we are not to pray against poverty, sicknesse, adversities and wants simply, but for the danger of sinning, which they bring men oftentimes unto: which manner of prayer (respecting the occasionall danger that attends many times on poverty, sicknesse, adversities and wants through our corruption) argues no discontentment with the opinion allotted unto us, and so may lawfully be used. Wee may pray against poverty, sicknesse, adversities, and wants, not simply, but to the end we may better glorifie God, expressing, or at least including alwayes a condition of Gods good pleasure, and to this effect, that we be never tried above that we are able. We may observe this in that prayer of *Agur. Pro. 30 8, 9. Give me not poverty nor riches: Feed me with food convenient for me, ver. 9. lest I be full and deny thee, and say, who is the Lord, or lest I be poore, and steale, and take the name of my God in vaine.*

The second question is this, whether such as get a portion of goods by theft, usury, oppression, or any other meanes condemned, may finde contentment in those goods, and say with comfort, it hath pleased God to bestow such a portion of wealth upon me?

Answer no: the guiltinesse of their owne conscience doth set a barre betwene them, and true contentment and comfort.

The Lord hath appointed they should have such riches?

It is true, the event reveales it: but as curses unto them, not as blessings, and for further increase of their judgement. When the meanes of getting goods are evill, it is revealed that the Lord doth purpose to curse men, even in good things, and that is an heave curse, and a thing (if it were duly considered) that is able to shake the heart of any usurper or greedy cormorant out of his security, and to this purpose the Apostle saith, *Jam. 5. 1. Go to now rich men, weep and howle, for the miseries that shall come upon you, a heave sentence full of terror: weeping and howling are part of hellish discord.*

The next thing we are to marke is, that the fulnesse of grace and merite is confined to the person of Christ, and that by the eternall decree of God, it pleased God the Father, that in the person of Christ should all fulnesse dwell. We finde it not said in any place of Scripture, that fulnesse of grace should or did dwell in any Saint whatsoever. The Papists are not able to warrant what they affirme of the Virgin *Mary*, that shee was full of grace, though they wouldaine ground it on the salutation of the Angell, *Luk. 1. 28.* for they translate, *Haile Mary full of grace*, but falsly and corruptly, and that may appeare by the use of the word, *Ephes. 1. 6.* and that by their owne translation, wherein he hath gratified us, &c. say they in that place. And the judgement of *Chrysostome* is cleane against them, and that with a very good reason, *in enim ex celis, &c.* he saith not grace which he hath given us, but *ex aeterno, whereby bee hab made us freely beloved*, which is agreeable to our translation, *Luk. 1. 28. Thou art freely beloved.* So then notwithstanding this coloured cavill, it remaines a true conclusion, that the fulnesse and perfection of grace is not, nor hath beene found in any one in this life,

but

but in the person of Christ. What a hellish pride therefore is it of some to be blowne up so high, as to dreame of perfection of inherent grace in themselves, in the time of this life?

I hope there is none amongst us of that opinion: and therefore the use of this may be unto us rather for comfort than reproofe, and may reach us first of all, that we are not to be discouraged, though we finde in our selves but small beginnings of grace, if it bee true grace, for the Lord gives grace unto us, according to the manner of our receiving, as the infirmity of our nature is able to receive it, which is not capable of perfection. It is like a glasse with a narrow mouth, and of small capacity and receipt, and the instrument of receiving which is faith, is weake and feeble: and the Lord (as here wee are taught) hath in his eternall councell, signed fulnesse and perfection of grace in this life, onely to the person of Christ. Thereby we may comfort our selves, if any of us finde but a small measure of grace truly wrought in us. Matth. 13. 33. *The Kingdome of heaven (saith our Saviour) is like leaven hid in three pecks of meale, and Gods kingdome is set up in the heart, upon very small beginnings: the very beginning of grace is comfortable, if it be true grace.*

How shall we know (will some say) that we have true beginnings of grace?

I answer, holding to the comparison of our Saviour, if grace be in us, as leaven hid in meale, which is *penetrans & diffusivum*, piercing, and of a spreading nature, if a proportionable measure of grace be found in every faculty of our soules, not onely illumination in the minde, but a measure of sanctification in the will, affections, and in all the powers of our soules (for sanctifying grace cannot be truly wrought in one part or faculty of the soule, but it will diffuse and spread it selfe over all the rest.) Hence is renovation of Gods Image in man called a new creation, which is entire of the whole man. If grace bee thus proportionable in every faculty of the soule, then it is truly wrought, and then though it be small in measure, yet it will afford us matter of singular comfort. And know we on the contrary, that if we have our heads abounding and overflowing with knowledge, and yet our hearts empty of good affections: grace is not truly wrought in us, and in time of temptation and triall it will faile us, and we shall finde no comfort in it.

For the second use, is it so that fulnesse of grace is only found in the person of Christ? then we must learne that lesson that hath a blessing set on the head of it, by Christ himselfe, and a comfortable promise annexed, Matth. 5. 6. *Blissed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.* Wee are in this life to bee in continuall hunger and thirst after grace, never to finde our selves full, and as it were glotted and gorged with any grace, but ever to finde an emptinesse and such a want of that grace, that is truly wrought in us, as doth require further supply and filling us: and that we can be content to breake through any danger, to attaine to a greater and more full measure of the same, as we say in our common proverbe, Hunger will breake stone walls, it will force a man to doe things above strength: yea, wee finde it recorded in stories, as (King. chap. 6. verf. 19.) it hath made some of the tenderest bowels, and most affectionate in regard of sex, even women to forget naturall affection. Such an impatient and holy feeling wee must have of the want of a full measure of grace, and such an hanging desire to bee further filled with grace that is already wrought in us: and to that end wee are to use all good meanes for further increase of it, hearing, reading, conferring, and continuall meditating in the Word of God, prayer, &c. and to use them with earnest intention of heart and minde. Wee can witness with our selves, that when wee have beene hungry wee have used meanes of filling our bellies, and of satisfying our hunger with our best endeavour: so must wee with all earnest endeavour use the meanes of further filling our hearts with that grace,

N

Use 1.

Finding in our selves but small beginnings of grace truly wrought, wee are not to bee discouraged.

Quest.

Answ.

Use 2.

We must hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Note.

Note.

Confutation of
the Papists.

Doll. 3.

All fulnesse of
merit hath re-
sidence in
Christ as in
the proper
subject of it.

Use.

Merit of life
eternall is not
ours by infu-
sion or inhe-
rencie, but by
application &
imputation.

that is begonne in us. Many there be who happily renounce the error of suppo-
sed perfection, and they will confesse that to be an error; yet notwithstanding
they feele not their owne emptinesse and want of grace, as they ought: they
have a soothing and pleasing contentment, they have (as they imagine) a com-
petent & sufficient measure of grace: for example, of faith, they beleeving the
remission of their finnes through the blood of Christ, though that faith neuer
shew it selfe, by any love or zeale to the glory of God, or an earnest care of the
good of their brethren, they think they have a *measure* of faith: yea, some out
of their blindness and out of their presumption dare say, their faith is so strong
that the devill cannot hurt them: such persons cannot have any hungering and
longing desire after further increase of faith, they think it matters not, whether
they profit, and be further built up in faith by the use of the meanes or no. I re-
ferre such persons but to that one place, Luk. 6.25. where they finde a woe de-
nounced against them, and that out of the mouth of Christ himselfe, *Woe be to
you that are full.* What? full of faith and grace? No, that is farre from the mean-
ing of Christ, he knew well there is no such fulnesse to be found: but woe to
you that in your owne conceits are full, to you that imagine a fulnesse of grace,
and thinke that you need not care for any further increase, to you belongs
woe and a heauie iudgement. If then we would not come within compasse of
this woe denounced by him who cannot lie, nor be deceived; let us take heed
how we fancie to our selves such a full and perfect measure of faith, as admits
no further increase by the use of good meanes. I grant there may be a *measure*
a full assurance of faith, *respectu objecti*, in respect of the object (namely) the
goodnesse, truth, and power of God, but not *respectu subiecti*, as it is in us, in re-
gard of our corruption. Where we finde full assurance spoken of in the Scrip-
ture, we may observe it hath relation to the object of faith, as Rom. 4.21. We
are not therefore to dreame of a full and perfect faith in us; but let us labour
to finde our weaknesse and want of faith, and every other grace truly wrought
in us: and hunger and thirst after a further measure of it, and use the meanes
by which it may bee increased, [*all fulnesse.*] I might here enter into confuta-
tion of that grosse error of the Papists, that Christ hath merited but the first
grace for us, that is, as they hold, hee hath merited that wee hereafter by our
merits may take away our owne finnes, yea, the finnes of others, a wicked
and damnable assertion: the right conceiving of this text, is a sufficient confu-
tation of it: for in Christ (as here wee are taught) is found all fulnesse of
merit.

The last thing we are briefly to observe from this verse is, from the last word
[*dwell:*] which word doth give us to understand thus much, that in Christ all
fulnesse of merit hath residence and abode, as in the proper seat and subject:
as in the proper mansion and receptacle, the merit of life eternall is properly in-
herent in Christ. And the reason is plaine, he is God and man in one person,
therefore he only is the proper subject of merit: for that person that must me-
rit, must be more than a mere man. If *Adam* had stood in his innocencie, hee
could not have merited any better estate for himselfe, because he was a mere
man, much lesse can we in the state of corruption: the ground of merit even in
Christ, is the personall union of God and man.

So then for the use of this, the merit of life eternall is not ours by infusion
and inherencie, but by application and imputation: it is not in us as is sanctifi-
cation, and as is the love of God and man, but it is applied and imputed unto
us, and freely bestowed upon true beleevers in Christ. It is not (as one saith well)
any dignity in us, but a dignation of us, an accepting and accounting us worthy
in Christ. We have the very phrase, Luk. 20.35. *that they may be counted worthy,*
&c. The Papists (the defender of inherent worthinesse, and merit of works)
object that, 2. Pet. 1.4. that true beleevers are partakers of the divine nature
and

and that doth raise up their workes to an higher dignity, and adds a worth of heaven unto them.

For answer, we are to marke the text: the Apostle saith not *essence* of the Godhead, or the nature of God, which is essentiall and incommunicable; but *discreetness* of the divine nature, which is nothing else but a quality created contrary to our old corrupt nature, even the image of God renewed, as the Apostle saith, in that yee fly the corruption which is in the world through lust. They cannot thence prove that we are deified, or one with God by personall union, which they must, before they can evince from thence any merit of our workes. True believers are partakers of the divine nature, that is, they have the spirit of God dwelling in them by the graces of righteousness and holiness, which is the image of God, and those graces being not perfect in us, bring forth an imperfect fruit which can never merit truly and properly.

Verf. 20. *And by him to reconcile all things unto himselfe, and to set at peace through the blood of his Crosse, both the things in earth, and the things in heaven.*

This verse is a further amplification of the Apostles second argument, whereby he proves Christ a sufficient redeemer, and the ground of this also is from the eternall decree of his Father, for that must be resumed (it pleased the father) [*by him to reconcile*]. The matter, substance, and general proposition laid downe in this verse, is this: That it pleased the Father, that the death of Christ, in whom all fulnesse of merit is found, should be a full and perfect atonement and reconciliation of all things to himselfe.

This is generally propounded in the first words [*and by him, &c.*] and then it is further explained with some change and variety of phrase: and withall there is mention made of the speciall means of reconciliation, namely the death of Christ, and that his bloody death upon the Crosse in those words [*and to set at peace by the blood of his crosse.*] In the last words wee have a distinction of all things reconciled in respect of place, that some be in earth, and some be in heaven, [*both the things in earth, and the things in heaven.*] These are the generall parts of this verse.

Come we to the first thing the generall proposition, [*And by him to reconcile all things unto himselfe.*] By him, that is, by Christ, not as an instrument as the Papists say, Christ is but a minister, yet a chiefe minister of reconciliation: for so they would cleare the eyes of such as reade their annotations in their Rhenish Testament: we are not so to understand the words of the Apostle, but by him as a materiall and meritorious cause of reconciliation, as the Apostle saith, 2. Cor. 5. 19. *God was in Christ reconciling the world to himselfe, not imputing their sinnes unto them.* To reconcile, that is, to set at one, and to make of enemies friends, as the Apostle saith, Rom. verf. 10. *For when wee were enemies, wee were reconciled to God by the death of his Sonne,* taking away the cause of enmity and difference, (namely) sinne: for so long as that remained untaken away, no friendship could be betweene God and man: and therefore wee have it in the place before-named, 2. Cor. 15. 19. *not imputing their sinnes unto them: [all things]* that is, all things in heaven and earth that hee had appointed to bee reconciled [*to himselfe.*] These words have reference to the word *Father* in the verse before.

Thus then we are to conceive these words, it pleased the Father by Christ, not as an instrument, but as the meritorious cause, to make all that hee had appointed to be reconciled even at one and at peace with himselfe, removing all cause of enmity betweene them and himselfe.

Here first we are to marke the connexion of this verse with the former, that the Apostle coupleth and conjoyneth these two together, that it pleased the Father, That in him should all fulnesse dwell, and by him (being full of merit) to reconcile all things unto himselfe. Whence it followes that our reconciliation

Ans.

Verf. 20.

Interpretation.

Doct. 1.

Our reconciliation with God is ever grounded on fulnes of merit.

with God, is ever grounded on the fulnesse of merit: fulnesse of merit in naturall order ever goes before reconciliation with God as the ground of it: and the reason is this: Reconciliation with God is an agreement and an atonement made betweene God and us, by taking away sin the cause of difference. Now sinne is not taken away without full satisfaction made unto God, and hee is not satisfied but by fulnesse of merit answering his iustice, even such merit as is able both to appease his wrath, and procure his loving favour: for no imperfect thing can satisfie the iustice of God: therefore fulnesse of merit ever goes before reconciliation with God.

Use.
We must apprehend fulnesse of merit before we can be perswaded of reconciliation with God.

For use of this, as it is in the naturall order of these things that fulnesse of merit goes before reconciliation with God, so is it in the comfortable apprehension of them that are reconciled to God: wee must first apprehend by faith the fulnesse of merit, before we can be perswaded of our reconciliation with God, the conscience of man will never be truly quieted and pacified touching reconciliation with God, till hee come to apprehend by faithfulness of merit in Christ: though a sanctified life and good workes, doe make our calling and election sure, 2 Pet. 1. 10. And it is the objection of the Papists, that our confidence in God touching the favour of God, ariseth not onely of faith, but of good workes: and for this they alledge, 1 Ioh. 3. 21. *If our hearts condemn us not, then have we boldnesse towards God: yet we must know that a Godly life and good workes give no assurance of themselves by their owne merit or worthinesse, (as the Papists teach) but as they have relation to faith, where they are evident signes, and as they have their life and activity from faith: to marke, that place of Peter, 2 Pet. 1. 5. 6. 7. Give evidence (saith hee) to make your calling and election sure, in doing these things, But what? doe these things done simply of themselves make sure our calling and election? No, no such matter, but as they are ioyned and knit unto faith: so saith the Apostle, verily I layne to your faith vertue, and with vertue knowledge, &c. So then good workes of themselves, breed no assurance of Gods favour, but as they are ioyned with faith and doe issue from our faith. It is the plaine doctrine of S. Paul, that being iustificed through faith, we have peace towards God, through our Lord Iesus Christ. Rom. 5: 1. Peace and confidence towards God, touching his favour and our reconciliation with him, ariseth from iustification by faith, and that hath ever relation to the perfect merit of the obedience and death of Christ, to the fulnesse of merit found in him. I may here be bold to relate as fitting to this purpose, a worthy observation of Luther: I have seene (saith hee) many among the Papists, who have painfully travelled, and upon meere conscience have done as much as was possible for them in fasting, prayer, and other exercises, and all to this end that they might obtaine quietnesse and peace of conscience; notwithstanding the more they travelled, the more they were stricken downe with feare and especially when the houre of death approached: they were then (saith hee) so fearefull, that I have seene many murderers, and other malefactors condemned to death, at the time of execution, dying more courageously, and more comfortably than they did. This Luther observed in his time, and there is reason for it from the word of God: for it is impossible that the conscience should ever be pacified, concerning reconciliation with God, by any good thing found in us, no, not by faith it selfe for the goodnesse of it, or done by us by the merit of it, but onely by faith apprehending the fulnesse of merit, and that found onely in Christ.*

Doff. 2.
There is enmity and disagreement betweene God and us, till we be reconciled unto him.

The next thing we have to marke, is to be gathered from the word (reconcile) the words give to consider of a foregoing enmity and disagreement: for reconciliation is ever (as we know) of parties at difference in regard of offence. So then hence we are taught, that before we are reconciled to God by Christ, there is enmity and disagreement betweene God and us, hee is an enemy unto us, and

and we are one mles to him: the Scripture is plentiful in the prooffe of this; we need goe no further than the verse following, *For which were in times past strangers and enemies*; in time before your reconciliation with God, there was enmity betweene God and you.

Let the use of this be, to teach us to labour for timely and speedy reconciliation with God by his Sonne Jesus Christ: I meane, for a small reconciliation: for though such as belong to God are in Gods purpose, and materially by the death of Christ reconciled to God, yet that is not comfortable till it be knowne to us: we must labour for a small reconciliation with God, by a justifying faith; and for assurance of it by the Spirit of God to stir us up to this duty, consider this: Is God our enemy? who then can be our friend? as the Apostle saith on the contrary, *If God be with us, who can be against us?* Rom. 8. 31. If he be against us, who can be for us? If God (who should comfort us in time of trouble and distresse) be angry with us; then our trouble and distresse is double upon us, it is both grievous and painful unto us, and it is mingled with the bitterness of the curse, it is an accursed trouble. In a word, if God be offended with us, and we not actually reconciled unto him, all the creatures are at enmity with us, all the judgements of God attend us; yes, we are liable, not only to common sufferings, but to strange and sudden judgements; as we see some unrepentant sinners suddenly overtaken by the hand of God many times in their greatest delights; even in the Sun-shine Sodome was destroyed, Gen. 19. 23, 24. and so it may bee with us for any thing wee know; therefore this exhortation is needfull, that with speed wee labour to bee reconciled to God: It was for nothing that the Apostle did so earnestly enforce it, 1 Cor. 5. 20. *Now we are Ambassadors for Christ, we pray you, pray God by us*; and Christ himselfe hath entreated you, that you would not contemne his grace, cast off his merits, and lightly regard his death, we pray you in Christs stead, that ye be reconciled to God.

I doubt not, upon due consideration of this truth, every one will confesse it a thing needfull to be reconciled to God; yet there bee many things to hinder the practise of this so necessary a duty, and one great hinderance of it I will discover; and that is the want of feeling of our owne misery, in which we are by nature. Many blesse themselves in their naturall state, and feele no want of the blood of Christ for reconciliation with God; they feele not themselves disjoyned from God, both in regard of holinesse and happinesse, and that there is in their whole man, both body and soule, an horrible confusion, their understanding full of palpable darknesse, their will perverse, abhorring that which is good, their affections raging and inordinate, and if they should die in that state, that they should enter into that unspeakable misery that hath no end, but shall continue for ever in hell: this many feele not, and so never seeke after reconciliation with God, and to bee free from this misery. Wee must therefore looke into the Word of God, that discovers our misery, and labour to have a lively sense and feeling of it: for that is the first step to blessednesse, to know and feele our owne misery: and know for a truth, that wee can never (with true comfort) apply the sweet promises of the Gospell touching remission of sinnes, till wee have a true feeling of our owne misery: it is the order Christ himselfe hath taught to bee held in our coming to him with hope of comfort, Math. 11. 28. *Come to mee you that labour*, you that feele your sinnes, and are pressed with the weight and burthen of them, and you shall finde ease, and none but you.

Wee are further to marke what the Apostle saith, *It pleased the Father to reconcile all things unto himselfe*. Hence we may gather, that every sinne is against God, every sinne reaches up to heaven, and is an offence against God himselfe: reconciliation here spoken of, being an agreement betweene God, and sinfull

Vse.

We are to labour for speedy reconciliation with God.

Note.

The first step to blessednesse.

Doll. 3.

Every sinne is against God.

man, it must needs be that every sinne is against God to whom reconciliation is made, we reade, Psalm. 51. 4. that *David* (in the confession of his adultery) doth avouch it with repetition and doubling, *against thee, against thee only have I sinned*: and the Lord himselfe saith, Genes. 20. 6. that he kept *Abimelech* from adultery, and in that, from sinning against himselfe, *I kept thee that thou shouldst not sinne*, not against *Abraham*, but *against me*.

Reason 1.

Reasons of this are these: every sin is a transgression of Gods Law, 1 Joh. 3. 4. and so, offensive to the Law-giver, God himselfe.

Object.

Object. The Law hath two Tables, the first concerning love to God; and the second concerning love to man; therefore it may seeme the breach and transgression of the Commandements of the first Table is onely against God.

Answ.

The breach and transgression of any Commandement of the first Table is directly and immediately against God, but not onely; the breach and transgression of a Commandement of the second Table, as it is a transgression, is also against God: for every evill word spoken, or deed done against man hath a double relation, either to God as a transgression of his Law, or to man, in the hurt arising by it unto man, as a transgression, it is a sin, and so against God; and there is such an agreement and combination betwene the two Tables, that the first is fulfilled in the second; for by duties of love to our brethren, we fulfill our love to God; so the transgression of the second doth redound to the first: and so is also against God.

Reason 2.

Secondly, every sinne is against him that hath absolute and full power to remit it; and that is onely God, by the testimony of the Scribes, Luk. 5. 21. and therefore every sinne is against God.

Object.

If any oppose against this, that, in the Petition, *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*?

Answ.

The answer is, we doe remit the trespasses of our brethren, not as they properly sins and transgressions, (for so the remission of them belongs onely to the Lord, and no man is able to doe it) but as they bring detriment and hurt to man, either in body, or goods, or good Name; so man may remit without impeachment or derogation to Gods glory. A man doth remit a trespass, when he doth forgive the hurt arising from thence to himselfe, together with all conceived anger and malice: but the remission of any trespass (as it is a sinne) properly and onely belongs to God; it is therefore a true conclusion, that every sinne (though it bee an evill against man) is not so much against the person of man upon earth, as against the Majesty of God in heaven.

Use 1.

Confutation of
a Popish distinction.

This truth meets with that erroneous mincing and extenuating distinction of sinne, made by the Papists, that some finnes are veniall, and some mortall; yea, veniall of their owne nature, even such as are onely besides and not against the Law of God, and may stand with true justice, and deserve not eternal death, but are taken away by some temporary punishment: this extenuation of sinne cannot stand with the doctrine now delivered: for if every sinne be against God who is infinite in Majesty and glory, it must needs deserve infinite punishment. The greatnesse of every offence against any person in the Commonwealth is ever measured and esteemed according to the dignity and quality of the person against whom it is committed: so sinne being against God, the due deserved punishment of it, of necessity must bee answerable to the offence of so high a Majesty, there being ever a proportion betwene the Law-giver, the Law it selfe, and the punishment due to offenders: it is therefore to be renounced as a shifting vaine distinction, invented by the Papists, to obscure the great grace of God in the remission of finnes; that some finnes are of their owne nature veniall.

Use 2.

For a second use: Is it so that every sinne reacheth to heaven, and is an offence against God? hence take we knowledge of the enormity and greatnesse of every sinne,

finne, though it be a finne against the second Table, though it be an evill word or deed against man, to the hurt of his body, goods, or good name, yet we must know it stayeth not at the man, but reacheth up to the Lord, and hee it is that will be avenged of it: every man can take notice of the grosse finnes of the second Table, yea, many hold them the onely great finnes (which indeed they are not) though they be very foule: but if they wrong their brethren either secretly, or in small matters, then they (out of the blindness of their mind) thinke it either no finne at all, or a trifling finne; if they can blind the eyes of men, all is well: but know it whosoever thou art, though thou maist deceive man, and blear his eyes with a thousand devices, yet thy finne is against God, and thou canst not blinde his eyes: no gifts, no bribes, no cunning, can stop or stay him, as he is God, he will have vengeance for his part, 1 Sam. 2. 35, saith old Elj, If one man sinne against another, the Judge as Mediator may moderate and order the matter, and by his authority cause him that hath done the wrong, (as it is a wrong to man) to make recompence and satisfaction: but as it is a finne against the Lord, who will plead for him? surely none but Jesus Christ the righteous.

We are to take notice of the enormity and greatnesse of every finne.

Come wee to the explanation of the Apostles generall proposition, in the words following, [*and to set at peace*] where we see a change of the phrase, and expressing of the speciall meane of reconciliation. To set at peace, is all one in substance with the former phrase, to reconcile, and so to be conceived, namely, to set at one, to make of enemies friends: [*through the blood of his crosse*] that is, through his bloody death: it is a metonymicall speech, blood being put for the shedding of his blood: and it is added [*of his Crosse*] to signifie the condition of his death, which was accursed: and to make a difference of that shedding of his blood, and the shedding of it at other times: as at the time of his circumcision, whipping, crowning with thornes, which were preparatives to the shedding of his blood upon the Crosse. Thus then the words are to be understood, And to set at one, to make of enemies friends, through his death, and that his bloody and accursed death on the Crosse.

Interpret.

The first thing we have hence to make, is generall, namely this, that reconciliation and peace made betweene God and his Elect (by taking away sin) is onely by the bloody death of Christ, by Christ his sacrifice on the Crosse: the Apostle here sets it downe as the proper fruit and effect of Christ his death: and wee finde it not in any place of Scripture ascribed to any other thing, but only to the death of Christ: and for this wee have many pregnant places, Heb. 9. 26. Now in the end of the world hath he appeared once to put away sinne by the sacrifice of himselfe, Hebr. 10. 14. With one offering, hath hee consecrated for ever them that are sanctified: our Saviour saith, Joh. 19. 30. consummatus est, it is finished, hereby signifying the consummation and perfection of his Crosse.

Doct. 4.
Reconciliation betweene God and his chosen, is made onely by the bloody death of Christ

The point being cleare, it serves for the use of it, to confute the Papists touching their reall and externall sacrifice, which they hold to bee in the Sacrament of the Supper, even the very body and blood of Christ under the formes of bread and wine, offered up to God the Father as a propitiatory sacrifice for the quicke and dead, that is, their doctrine: Now these two things cannot stand together, that reconciliation and peace was made by the death of Christ betweene God and his chosen, and that there is another propitiatory sacrifice in the Sacrament: And that we may yet further see the error of the Papists, and be better settled in the truth taught by our Church, grounded on the Word of God: consider we but this one reason Christ his sacrifice once offered upon the crosse, is a most perfect and full satisfaction for the finnes of Gods Elect, and is of infinite and eternall vertue and efficacie, and therefore other reall sacrifices are needlesse and superfluous.

Vse.
Confutation of the Papists.

The learned amongst the Papists reply, that the sacrifice of the crosse is indeed of

Objct.

of infinite and eternall vertue to satisfie, and sanctifie, but yet (say they) there must be other sacrifices to represent and apply the vertue and fruit of that sacrifice unto us.

Ans.

There is no more reason why Christ should againe bee sacrificed, than his owne perfect oblation once offered upon the Crosse, might bee applied unto us, than there is that he should be againe incarnate, that the fruit of his incarnation might bee applied unto us, for they can shew no dissimilitude betweene these things.

Obj.

They reply further by way of distinction, that whereas the Holy Ghost saith, wee are sanctified by that oblation of Christ his body once offered upon the Crosse, hee speaks of the bloody sacrifice which was sufficient once to be done: but besides that, there is an unbloody sacrifice, whereby Christ is offered under the formes of bread and wine in the Sacrament, and that is but an iteration of the former, whereby the fruit and effect of the former is applied unto us.

Ans.

This distinction is flat contrary to the plaine text of the Apostle, Heb. 10. 11, 12. for if Christ should bee often sacrificed, after what manner soever it skills not, then the difference would not hold, which the holy Ghost makes betweene the sacrifices of the Law, and the sacrifice of Christ, for thus stands the opposition. The sacrifices of the Law were often to be offered, but the sacrifice of Christ onely once. The Priests of the Law had many iterative and commemorative sacrifices of Christ his death, therefore we have not so now: this is the opposition of the holy Ghost, and this falls to the ground, if there be any iteration of Christ his sacrifice. Againe, the distinction is absurd and foolish, that Christ should offer himselfe upon the Crosse after a bloody manner, and in the Sacrament after an unbloody manner: for the sacrifice and offering of Christ, and his death and suffering (which cannot bee without effusion of blood) are made by the holy Ghost all one: Christ cannot bee offered without dying and suffering, Heb. 9. 25, 27. therefore this distinction was never knowne to the holy Ghost, neither hath it any footing in the word: it remaines a truth, that Christ his sacrifice once offered upon the Crosse, is most absolute, and of infinite merit and vertue to reconcile us unto God; and therefore other reall sacrifices, whether representative (as they call them) or unbloody whatsoever, are needlesse and vaine, and there is not in the Sacrament of the Supper, any reall, externall, propitiatory sacrifice, as the Papists grossly hold and teach.

The next thing we have to marke is this, in that the Apostle makes the speciall meanes of reconciliation betweene God and his chosen, by taking away of their sins, both the guilt and punishment, to be the death and passion of Christ, that it pleased the Father to reconcile, &c.

Doct. 5.

Our justification in the sight of God, is not only by the death of Christ

We may hence conclude, that our justification in the sight of God, is not onely by the death of Christ: the thing by which wee are justified in the sight of God, is not the passion of Christ alone, though that is one speciall thing by which we are justified: for by that, as many as truly beleve in Christ have onely remission of their finnes, which is but one part of our justification in the sight of God: in common reason wee know that reconciliation amongst men is made, when the party offending hath satisfied the party offended, either by himselfe, or some other: for the offence, bee it really, or in words onely, reconciliation properly goes no further: the party offending, doth not by satisfaction for the offence, deserve further favour, unlesse there be something else over and beside that satisfaction: so it is in this case, the chosen of God being the parties offending, God being the party offended by their sinne: and satisfaction being made to his justice by the death of Christ, that death alone considered, doth not procure any more than remission of their finnes, and deliverance from all punishment: it doth not also purchase a right of life everlasting, and so

our iustification in the sight of God, is not by the death of Christ alone, but also by the obedience of his life, our compleat and full iustification in the sight of God, is by the obedience of Christ as well active as passive. It is held by some, that our iustification in the sight of God, is onely by the death of Christ, and that the passion is the onely thing, by which we are iustified in Gods sight.

I will therefore labour first to strengthen the truth now delivered, by some reasons out of the word of God, and then answer such things as are commonly objected against it.

First therefore consider wee this reason: Christ is not onely the price of redemption, but the end and perfection of the Law: to what purpose? for righteousness unto every one that beleeveth. They are the very words of the Apostle, Romans, 10. 4. Christ perfectly fulfilled the Law for righteousness unto every one that beleeveth. Therefore every true beleever is iustified in Gods sight, not onely by his death and passion, but by his righteousness imputed.

Secondly, we finde these two things, righteousness, and redemption, to be severall and distinct benefits bestowed on true beleevers, 1 Cor. 1. 30. *It is of him in Christ Iesus, who of God is made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption.* Therefore by the death of Christ, the price of redemption, we have onely deliverance from sinne and deserved death, and not the gift of righteousness, to life eternall, they are distinct benefits.

Thirdly, whole Christ is given unto us with all his benefits, for he was incarnate, and borne not for himselfe, but for us, I say 9. 6. *Vnus ut childa is borne, and unto us a sonne is given,* that he might bestow himselfe wholly on us as a Mediator: and all the workes of mediation, as (namely) his holy incarnation, his fulfilling of the Law, and his suffering for sinne; therefore we by faith are made partakers of the righteousness of Christ, as well as of the merit of his death. If it were not so, then it would follow, that halfe Christ, Christ onely suffering, and not working, were given unto us.

Fourthly, the Apostle saith, Rom. 5. 19. *As by one mans disobedience many were made sinners, so by one mans obedience many shall be made righteous:* Where hee compares Adam and Christ together, that as many as were made sinners by Adams sinne imputed unto them, so many are made righteous by the obedience of Christ imputed.

If any except against this, and say, the Apostle there meanes Christ his obedience, in submitting himselfe willingly to the death, in which it was his Fathers will he would suffer for his chosen.

I answer, that the Apostle speakes not onely of Christ his obedience to death, but generally of his whole course of righteousness, both in his life and death, and that is evident in that he calls it the gift of righteousness, verse 17. and the raing of grace by righteousness through Iesus Christ, verf. 21.

These reasons doe plainly evince this truth, that true beleevers are iustified in the sight of God, not onely by Christ his death, but also by his active obedience, and his perfect fulfilling of the law for them being imputed unto them.

Now against this it is commonly objected, that Christ fulfilled the Law for himselfe, and therefore his death alone, is that by which we are iustified in the sight of God.

Christ as a man fulfilled the Law for himselfe, that hee might be an holy high Priest in both natures: but as mediator God and man, he did not, neither was bound to fulfill it for himselfe, for in that his flesh was personally united to his Godhead, it was in it selfe fully sanctified, and from his very conception in the wombe of his mother, most worthy to be blessed with eternall life, and had right to eternall life, as the flesh of the sonne of God, but yet Christ of his owne accord became subiect, and fulfilled the law for us.

It is said againe, wee read that by the blood of Iesus wee have entrance, wee have

Some hold that our iustification in the sight of God, is onely by the death of Christ.

Reasons confirming the truth of the Doctrine.

2

3

4

Object.

Answer.

Objections against the doctrine delivered, answered.

1. Object.

Answer.

2. Object.

have *ius ingrediendi in Sancta, nempe caelum*, Heb. 10. 19. (that is) right to eternal life by the blood of Christ, Rom. 5. 9. we are justified by his blood, and we shall be saved from wrath by him.

Answ.

There is such nearness and affinity between the passion of Christ, and his active obedience, that the one may not be severed from the other: For Christ in suffering obeyed, and in obeying suffered. When therefore the holy Ghost saith, that by the blood of Christ we are justified: we are to understand it as a *figurative speech*, where one part of the obedience of Christ is set downe for the whole. Thus we finde iustification ascribed to the resurrection of Christ, Rom. 4. 25. which indeed doth only iustifie by way of testimony and application, and not by satisfaction, as doth the obedience of his life and death.

3. Obiect.

Some doe further object on this manner, say they, such as truly beleve in Christ, are freed by Christ from the guiltinesse and punishment of their finnes, and are in and through him adopted to bee the children of God, and by their adoption have right and title to heaven, yea, they are coheires with Christ, Rom. 8. 17. and therefore are justified only by Christ his death and passive obedience.

Answ.

To this I answer, that iustification hath ever adoption annexed unto it, and such as are justified by Christ, are also adopted, and have received power to bee actually accounted the children of God by Christ: but we must know that our adoption comes from the obedience of the sonne of God, made man, and from his voluntary subiection to the Law, and his fulfilling of it: the text is plaine, Gal. 4. 4. 5. *God sent forth his sonne made of a woman, and made under the Law, not borne, but made, that he might redeem them which were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sonnes.* The obedience of the Sonne of God, made man, and made under the Law, is that which freeth true beleivers from under the Law, and gives them adoption of sonnes. Christ as the naturall sonne of God, is heire of his Fathers Kingdome: true beleivers as the adopted sonnes become partakers of the same inheritance. Christ his meditation performs to them the grace of adoption, and his meditation is his holy incarnation, his fulfilling of the Law, and his suffering for sinne, and therefore still it remains a truth, that we are justified in Gods sight, not by the death of Christ alone, but also by his active obedience.

Objection.

Some object that faith is accounted or imputed for righteousness, and no other righteousness, required to our iustification in Gods sight, but faith, and therefore the righteousness of Christ is not imputed unto us, to our iustification.

Answ.

I answer, nothing indeed is required on the true beleivers part, but faith, nothing else on his part is necessary to his iustification in Gods sight by the covenant of grace, but faith; yet that faith must bee considered together with the object of it (namely) that which it takes hold of, and that is the righteousness of God, as the Apostle calls it, 1 Cor. 5. 21. and that is the perfect righteousness of Christ; which hath all the power and merit of it from his Godhead and is therefore called the righteousness of God, Phil. 3. 9. and so is faith counted for righteousness, because it takes hold on that which is our righteousness in the sight of God, even the perfect righteousness of Christ. Other objections there be, but these are the chiefe, and these being answered, let us hold it as a truth grounded on the word of God, that our iustification in the sight of God is not only by the death and passion of Christ, but also by his perfect active obedience imputed unto us. Before wee come to the last words of this verse, observe one thing further: the Apostle saith not, through the wood of his crosse, but through the blood of his crosse: power to reconcile, pacifie, satisfie and sanctifie, is not given to the wood of the crosse, but to Christ his painefull suffering on the crosse. The Papists ascribe much to the woddan materiall crosse of Christ, that it being the instrument of redemption, and the Altar on which Christ

was

We are to hold the truth of the doctrine delivered. Popish superstition touching the woddan crosse of Christ discovered to bee most grosse.

was offered, it is sanctified and truly called holy crosse, whereas indeed the Scripture never calls it holy, but rather cursed, for the Apostle proves, that Christ became accursed for us, in that he suffered on the Crosse; and that by testimony taken out of the old Testament: it is written, *Cursed is every one that hangeth on tree*, Gal. 3. 13. Yet the Papists will needs force holinesse upon the wooden Crosse, yea, they put confidence in it, and pray unto it, Holy crosse save us: thus grossly superstitious are they: it is sufficient to have named this among such as renounce and abhorre such Popish, grosse, and carnall superstition.

Come we to the last words (*both the things in earth, and the things in heaven*) These words are a distinction of things reconciled to God: by things in earth we are to understand onely the chosen of God, living in the world: by things in heaven, the holy and elect Angels as they are called, 1 Tim. 5. 21.

Have the elect Angels who never sinned need of Christ a Mediatour? This seemes contrary to all shew of truth, for reconciliation is a setting at one, by taking away sinner.

Angels have need of Christ a Mediatour, not of redemption from sin, for so Christ is onely the Mediatour betweene God and man, 1 Tim. 2. 5. but of conservation in goodnesse and grace, that they might by the grace of Christ be confirmed, and set out of danger, of defection, and falling from God, and that they might againe bee knit together with the Elect, under one and the same head Christ Jesus, as the Apostle saith, Ephes. 1. 10. that he might gather together in one, all things, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth in Christ. In these respects the holy Angels had need of a Mediatour.

Now that which wee have hence to marke, is this, that it pleased the Lord together with the reconciliation of his chosen to himselfe, to worke confirmation of his elect Angels in grace & goodnesse, knitting them inseparably to himselfe, he would not perfect the blessednesse of his holy Angels, without the blessednesse of his chosen amongst men: he might have confirmed them long before, but he would not, it was not his pleasure to give them that blessing, till Jesus Christ the Mediatour came and joyned them with man.

Here then wee are taught to see and consider the infinite and unspeakable love of God to his chosen: that his chosen children are right deare to the Lord, and of exceeding great price with the Lord. We shall finde it the argument of the Holy Ghost himselfe, to prove that the Lord had a fatherly, provident, and speciall regard of his Church under the new Testament: that the Saints that suffered in time of the old Testament, got not the thing promised, because God had respect to us: *God providing, that they without us should not be perfected*, Heb. 11. 39, 40. where the argument stands thus: That the Lord had a fatherly care over us, because they were not made perfect without us, and so it doth plainly manifest and evince the Lords wonderfull love, and his gracious regard of his chosen, that he would not give his holy Angels their full blessing of their confirmation in grace, without the blessing of the reconciliation of his chosen, and that the love of the Lord toward his chosen, may bee yet more cleare unto us: consider that the chosen children of God, are so esteemed of the Lord, that for their sakes he doth many times extend his bounce, and bestow temporary benefits upon the wicked: if ten of them had bin found in Sodome, the whole City had beene spared for their sakes, Gen. 18. The world doth hate, malice, mocke, and contemne the godly, making more account of one prophane *Eshan*, than of twenty true hearted *Jacobs*; but the Lord whose love is life it selfe, more esteemeth one *Jacob*, one faithfull servant of his, than ten thousand worldlings; yea, ten of them shall stand before him to turne him from anger to mercy, when he will not vouchsafe to respect ten thousand such as the world honoureth, for men and women of great account.

Interpret.

Object.

Answer.

Doct. 6.

Gods chosen children are right deare to the Lord.

Oh

Vse 1.

We are to seek
and sue to bee
within com-
passe of Gods
love.

Vse 2.

Such as feare
God, bring
much good to
the place
where they
live.

Vers. 21, 22.

Oh then let us ever seek and sue to be within compasse of the Lords love, rather than the worlds liking : and say with the Prophet David, Psalm. 4. 6. *Many say, we will shew in any good : but Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon me.*

Againe, are the chosen of God of such high esteeme and price with the Lord, that without them hee would not perfect the blessed estate of his holy Angells, and by them and for them he extends his goodnesse to the wicked? Then let us have our eyes opened to behold whether good or evill doe come to a land, to a City, or to an house by such as feare God : for the sake of ten such, the Sodomites had escaped the fearfull plague of fire and brimstone, and for Noahs sake was Cham preserved. Paul had all the soules given him that were in the ship, Act. 27. 34. Are these then the hosts of a place, and must be rooted out, or else we shall not be well? Oh learne then to see their price with God, and the profit and good that comes even to the wicked, by such men and women as feare the Lord : learne to esteeme of them as we ought : Let us not be like the Gadarenes, Mar. 5. to prefer our swine before Christ, and with any one fearing God to be gone, rather than part with a trifling profit. Learne, I say, to thinke on the price with God, and profit to men, of such as feare the Lord.

Vers. 21. *And you which were in times past strangers and enemies, because your minds were set on evill works, both be now also reconciled.*

22. *In the body of his flesh through death, to make you holy and unblameable, and without fault in his sight.*

In these words the Apostle applies that which hee hath generally said of reconciliation in vers. 20. to the Colossians in speciall, affirming that they in particular, were reconciled to God by the death of Christ, that is the proposition laid downe in these two verses.

Now this proposition is amplified by the description of the Colossians, what they were before their reconciliation, (namely) *strangers and enemies*, and *you which were in times past strangers and enemies* : together with the proper seat and subject of that enmity (namely) *their minds*, and not in the essence and substance of their minds, but in the quality of them, that their minds were set on evill works, ill affected.

The second amplification of the proposition, is in the 22. verse, from the end of their reconciliation in these words, *to make you holy and unblameable*, and that before him, *in his own sight* : these are the generall parts of these two verses.

I will first stand on that part of the Apostles proposition that is laid down in the 21. verse, together with the description of the Colossians, before their calling and conversion : *you which were strangers*, that word is metaphoricall, and is put to signifie a spirituall separation and alienation from God. That the Colossians before their conversion, were as strangers unto God, in respect of spirituall communion, that they had (as it were) nothing to doe with God, nor hee with them, in regard of any spirituall blessing and comfort promised to his children : so doth the Apostle expresse it in the state of the Ephesians, chap. 2. 12. *That they were aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, and were strangers from the covenant of promise, and had no hope, and were without God in the world* : and makes it further cleare by opposition, vers. 19. that to be *strangers*, is to have no fellowship with him, either publique or private : *enemies*, that is, such as did hate God, and were hated of God for sinne.

Interpret.

Objection.

How can it bee that any should hate God the chiefe good, yea, goodnesse it selfe?

Answer.

The wicked hate God, not simply as he is God, and the chiefe good, but as hee is a Judge and a severe punisher of sinne, and as the guilty malefactor doth hate

hate the Iudge, not as he is man, good, liberall, &c. but as he is a iust ſerſencer of his euill deeds. (hath he) that is, God the Father, reconciled, that is, actually and effectually, by communicating unto you the vertue of the death of his Son. Thus then the words are to bee conceiued: and even you Colossians, who in times past were eſtranged from God, in regard of ſpirituall communion; yes were ſuch as hated God, and were hated of God; hath God the Father now actually and effectually reconciled.

The firſt thing that we have here to marke, is, that the Apoſtle doth not content himſelfe to deliver the generall doctrine of reconciliation, betweene God and his choſen, but he doth in particular apply it to the Colossians, and ſaith even you hath he reconciled.

Hence we may gather, that generall doctrines taught out of the Word, muſt be particularly applyed to the hearers, for their comfort or reproofe, or to profitable uſe for their edification. We find it the Apoſtles charge to Timothy, 1 Tim. 4. 2. not onely in generall to preach the word, to open and publiſh the ſecrets of the Goſpell, but to be inſtant in improving, rebuking and exhorting, with all long ſuffering and doctrine, Tit. 2. 15. *Theſe things ſpeake, and not onely ſo, but exhort and rebuke with all authority:* the reaſon and ground of this is twofold.

Fiſt, becauſe the Lord hath ordained the preaching of his Word, not onely for the edification of the underſtanding, and for the information of the iudgement and bettering in knowledge: but for the reformation of the heart and life, that the heart alſo may be ſtirred up to a love of God, and an hatred of euill, and that eſpecially, becauſe in all diuine and holy exerciſes, the hearts and affections, both by naturall corruption, and Satans ſuggeſtion, are moſt wayward and unruly. It is an eaſie matter to bring the body, and not ſo hard to attend and to conceive the doctrine delivered: but to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt, as the Apoſtle ſpeakes, 2 Cor. 10. 5, that is a matter of great hardneſſe and difficulty, and therefore the truth muſt not onely be taught in generall, but it muſt alſo be applyed in particular, that the power of it may be felt to a thorow reformation.

Againe, ſome of the hearers of the Word are in their naturall blindeſſe and hardneſſe, ſome are poſſeſſed with a ſpirit of ſlumber, ſaſt a ſleepe in their carnall ſecurity: others ſhroud themſelves under hypocriſie, and therefore they muſt be dealt withall, not only with plaineneſſe and evidence of truth, but with powerfull application of that truth, and earneſt importunity: that the ignorant may bee informed, the ſenceleſſe and ſecure may bee rowled, and the hypocriticall made to ſee their ſinne.

Is it ſo that generall doctrine muſt be particularly applyed to ſome profitable uſe? ſurely then the hearers muſt ſuffer both teaching, inſtruction, and alſo reprehension, and correction, as occaſion is offered to the teacher: they muſt not ſtart aſide when the Word is opened and applyed to their iuſt reproofe, ſhewing them their ſinnes, or threatening iudgements againſt them for their ſinnes: men muſt heare with willingneſſe and patience the word of iuſt reproofe, and not quarrell with the affection of the ſpeaker, when they are iuſtly taxed for their ſinnes. If they doe, it is not onely an argument of a ſpirituall phrenſie, but of Gods iudgements imminent and ready to fall upon them, when they cannot abide to bee touched, but will have Preachers ſpeake pleaſing and flattering things unto them, this iniquity (ſaith the Prophet Iſaiah. 30. 13. 14. *ſhall be unto them as a breach that falleth, both ſuddenly and remedileſſe, without all hope of recovery, like the breaking of a potters pot, which is broken without pitty, and in the breaking thereof is not found a ſhewd to take fire out of the hearth, or to take water out of the pit.*

And conſider we, that the Word truly taught and applyed, neuer retournes empty, for if it worke not godly ſorrow and amendment, certainly it workes hardneſſe

Doct.

Generall doctrines muſt be applyed particularly.

Reasons.

Uſe. Hearers of the Word muſt ſuffer inſtruction and reproofe, as iuſt occaſion is offered to the teacher.

Note.

hardnesse and impenitency: it is either the favour of life to life, or the favour of death to death; and remember withall what *Salomon* hath said, *Pro. 28. 9.* that *he that turneth away his eare from hearing the Law, even his prayer shall be abominable.* He that refuseth to heare God speaking in his accusing, condemning and threatening Law, the Lord in iustice will turne away his eare from his prayer, and his prayer doth incense the Lord to wrath against him. Learne wee then to submit our selves, to bee taught the truth, and to be rebuked for any thing that is a misse in us.

Vse. 2.
The Minister
of God may
apply the pro-
mises of the
Gospel to par-
ticular belie-
vers.

Objct.

Answer

Men may be
changed in
respect of their
spirituall con-
dition.

Reason 1.

Secondly, is it so, that the Word must not onely be generally taught, but particularly applied? Surely then the Minister of God may lay the indefinite promises of the Gospel to the heart of every particular man for his comfort, and assure him, that he beleiving them, shall be saved.

Yea, but saith the Papist, every man is a liar, and may both deceive, and bee deceived, and the Minister telling may erre: how doth either the Minister know that the man to whom he speakes is of the number of the Elect? or how can the man be certaine that the Minister mistake not, when he doth assure him of his salvation?

See how these enemies of the grace of God, and of the word of his grace, would faine shift off the plaine evidence of the Word, to hold the people in suspense and doubt of their salvation.

"It is not to the purpose, whether the Minister know that the man to whom he speakes be in the number of the Elect: the Minister doth not, neither is he to assure any man of his salvation, but upon condition of beleiving, hee doth onely apply the generall promises of the word to every man particularly, upon condition of beleiving. After this manner the Gospel saith, *Whosoever believeth shall be saved:* the application of the Minister is this, therefore beleieve thou *Iohn* or *Thomas*, and thou shalt be saved: and this is in effect, as if Christ himselfe should say unto him, beleieve thou, and thou shalt bee saved: for to his ministers he hath committed the word of reconciliation: *2 Cor. 5. 19.* and so any man finding true faith in himselfe, (as he may finde it upon due examination, as the Apostle hath made cleare: *2 Cor. 13. 5.* *Prove your selves whether ye are in the faith. Examine your selves: know ye not your owne selves, how that Iesus Christ is in you except ye bee reprobates?* hee may bee assured of his owne salvation.

The next thing we have to marke is this: the Apostle saith, the Colossians, were in times past *strangers and enemies*, but now they were reconciled. From this difference of times, we may conclude, that there is an intercourse and successive change, not onely in things naturall, but also in things spirituall and supernaturall: men may be changed in respect of their spirituall condition and of children of wrath by nature, they may be made the sonnes of God, and heires of life and salvation; a point plainly taught by Gods effectuall vocation, and calling of men out of the kingdome of darknesse, into the liberty of Gods children, and not only cleare from this text, but by many other places of Scripture, *Rom. 6. 11.* *ye have beene servants of sinne, but ye have obeyed from the heart, unto the forme of the doctrine wherunto ye were delivered,* *Ephes. 5. 8.* *ye were once darknesse, but now are light in the Lord.* If any man bee truly called out of the state of nature into the state of Grace, he can (upon his owne experience) iustifie this truth, that the Spirituall condition of men may in time bee changed: and the ground of this is, Gods eternall purpose of saving some. For whom hee hath (before all times) appoynted to life and salvation, them he will (in time) call and bring home to himselfe. *Rom. 8. 30.* *Whom he predestinated, them also he called, and whom he called, them also he iustified, and whom he iustified, them also he glorified. Other sheepe I have, which are not of this fold, them also must I bring,* saith our Saviour, *Ioh. 10. 16.*

This

This being so, that the Lord in time will bring home his wandering sheepe into his sheepefold, and draw them that are farre off neare to himselfe: it serves to reprove the preposterous and rash iudgement of some, who are so bold as to step up into Gods chaire, and to give their definitive sentence of some wicked and ungodly men, and to pronounce them reprobates, and utterly cast away. We must take heed of this boldnesse, and know that wee are not to despaire of the finall state of any wicked man, unlesse his sinne bee against the holy Ghost, (which we can hardly know and discern) for the Lord can, and will (in his appointed time) call him home, if he belong to his election. *Paul* his example may be instead of many: how was hee estranged from God? and how farre was hee carried in fury and bloud thirsty cruelty against the Church of God? *Act. 9. 1.* It is said, *he breathed out threatnings*: and his owne confession is, *Galath. 1. 13.* that *he persecuted* the Church of God extreame, and wasted it, yet afterward it pleased God to call and convert him; and of a violent bloody persecuter, to make him an excellent and famous preacher. In this example the Lord hath taught us to expect with patience the conversion of rebellious sinners; knowing this, that God can call and convert when he will, and whom he will: he calles labourers into his vineyard, some at one houre, and some at another, *Matth. 20.* it is therefore *Saint Pauls* lesson to *Timothy*, *2. Tim. 2. 25.* and it must bee ours, that wee suffer evill men patiently, that is curable, in whom there is any hope, proving if God at any time will call them to repentance; and God can, and will, in his good time bring home his chosen, be they never so farre strayed from him: therefore take heed of untimely censure, and rash condemning any man yet uncalld and unconverted.

Now in that the Apostle saith, that the Lord had now actually reconciled the Colossians, being sometimes meere strangers and enemies, wee will further gather, that Gods elect, though for the present they be uncalld, yet even then (in regard of election) they are within the compasse of Gods love. For why? the Lord will in time call them, and actually reconcile them to himselfe, as hee did the Colossians, and that doth plainly prove his precedent and foregoing love towards them, that he loved them before their effectual calling, even when they were strangers and enemies: yea, the Lord embracing his chosen in Christ, as the Apostle saith, *Ephes. 1. 4.* before the foundation of the world, though they make defection, and be estranged from him, yet he changeth not upon them, he onely hates their sinne, but still loves them. Hence it is that the Apostle saith, that God sets out his love, *Rom. 5. 8.* makes his love towards his Elect knowne yea he makes it knowne both to them, and to all the world, that hee loved them even while they were yet sinners, in that hee gave his Sonne Christ to die for them: and *S. Ioh. 1. Epist. 4. 9.* saith *In this appeared the love of God towards us, because God sent his onely begotten Sonne into the world, that we might live through him: his love was toward his chosen before and in this was it manifest, that he sent his onely begotten Son into the world, and even then when we loved not him, but were yet in our sinne, he loved us.*

The reason and ground of this is, from the Immutability of God, with whom is no variablenesse, neither shadowing of turning, *Iam. 1. 7.* and his love is essentiall, and of the same nature with himselfe, and therefore those whom he saith he loved from all eternity, and in love elected and appointed to life & salvation, them hee doth embrace in his love for ever. It is not their enmity towards him that can make them turne away his love from them in regard of election: and thus the Apostle reasoneth, that the Iewes (as concerning the Gospell) were enemies, but as touching the election, they are beloved for their Fathers sake, *Rom. 11. 28.* for (saith he, *v. 29.*) *The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. The Lords love either in gifts or love is unchangeable.*

But will some say, are the elect of God as yet uncalld, and as yet strangers

and

Vse.

We must take heed of untimely censure, and rash condemning such as are yet uncalld unconverted.

Doct. 3.

Gods elect in regard of election are beloved of God, being yet uncalld.

Reasons.

and enemies within the compasse of Gods love? then it seemes their persons and workes are pleasing unto God before their conversion, and that is agreeable to popish doctrine, that is a thing they much contend for and stand upon.

Ans.

For answer to this, we must learne to marke a different degree of the Lords love extended towards his chosen: in it selfe it admits neither more nor lesse, but as it is reached out towards Gods chosen, there be different degrees of it; for they are loved of the Lord before their calling, as the elect of God onely knowne to him so to be, and in time to be called with that degree of love that is proper to the elect uncalled; but when they are called and iustified, then they are loved with a further degree of his love, (even to an actual acceptance of their persons and good workes as pleasing unto him in Christ: they being ingrafted into Christ, their persons and good workes are actually accepted as pleasing to God, in, and through Christ: and so it remaines a truth, that the chosen of God yet uncalled, in regard of election, are loved of God, though not with that degree of his love, it pleaseth him to vouchsafe to them that are actually called.

Vse.

A ground of great comfort to such as have testimony of Gods speciall love towards them.

This may be to every one that hath had testimony of Gods speciall love towards himselfe, a ground of exceeding great comfort: for why? is it so, that Gods chosen are loved of God from all eternity? are men when they are uncalled within the compasse of that love of the Lord? then whosoever hath had a true taste and testimony of Gods love towards him, may be comforted, with full assurance that that love shall continue for ever. Doth the Lord still love those whom he hath elected, though they be as yet estranged from him, and doe not know his love: and will he in time make knowne that love of his to them in their reconciliation to himselfe? And will his love then ever faile those to whom it hath bene manifested and testified in speciall manner? It is not possible, though the Lord for the present may seeme to hide his face from thee, yet if ever thou hast had any pledge of his speciall love towards thy selfe, comfort thy selfe, thou maist be assured his love will never forsake thee, his love is eternal and never changeth, and upon former experience of it, thou maist reason thus for thy comfort: The Lord hath formerly testified his love towards me, therefore he will still continue to love me, he will be good unto me, because he hath bene good, and adde one testimony of his love and mercy to another, to his first, a second, to the second a third, and so ever one mercy to another, and one measure of love to another. This *David* knew well, and therefore he entreated the Lord to be good unto him, because he had bene good, *Psalm. 4. 1. Thou hast set me at liberty when I was in distresse; and therefore still have pity upon mee: this was the ground of Davids comfort, and this may stablish thy heart also with comfort: If ever thou hast tasted the sweetnesse of the Lords speciall love, thou maist with cheerefull heart say: O Lord be good unto mee, not because I have been a good servant of thine, but because thou hast bene a good God of mine. If thine obedience wereto be the argument why the Lord should be good unto thee, then (though thou beest a faithfull servant of God) yet doubtlesse in conscience of thine owne sinne, thine heart would faile thee: but the argument is to bee the Lords former goodnesse and love expressed towards thee, and this is a sure argument that will never deceive thee: the Lord hath bene good, therefore he will still, and ever be good; thou hast had experience of his love, therefore build upon it, his love shall never faile thee. Let us meditate and think upon this ground of comfort: in time of need wee shall finde much sweetnesse in it.*

Dott. 4.

A stranger to God is an enemy to God.

The next thing we have to marke (as a ground of further instruction) is this, the Apostle doth couple and conioyne these two together, *strangers, and enemies*: hence we are taught, that a stranger to God, is an enemy to God, they ever go together: it is not betwene God & man, as betwixt man & man, one man may be

bee a stranger to another, yet not an enemy; but if thou be a stranger to God, thou art an enemy to God. Christ himselfe hath taught the truth of this, Math. 12.30. *be that is not with me is against me*: yea he makes it a reciprocall proposition, and true, backe againe; for saith he, Marke. 9. 40. *be that is not against us is on our part*: whence we may easily conceive the reason of it, why a stranger to God is an enemy to God, because (by the testimony of our Saviour) there is no *medium* betweene them, no middle condition betweene a stranger to God, and an enemy to God: bee that hath no communion with God (which indeed is to be a stranger unto him) he hath it with the devill: yea luke warme professors, such as the holy Ghost saith are *neither hot nor cold*, Revel. 3. 15. Which seeme to hold a middle condition: indeed and truth rightly considered, in that they are luke-warme they have fellowship with the devill, and so must needs (so far forth as they are luke-warme) be enemies to God: and this ought to teach us to take heed how we be every way estranged from the Lord.

Some the holy Ghost hath noted out as great strangers to the Lord, and such as are gone farre away from him: as riotous persons, drunkards, and such like: these (without question) are at open defiance with the Lord, their behaviour shewes it, *they bend their tongues like bowes*, as saith the Prophet, Ier. 9. 3. *and shoot out their arrows*, bitter and blasphemous words against God.

Wee must not onely take heed of this, that we become not such strangers as these, who are at open warre with the Lord, and can iustly looke for nothing, but that the Lord should deale with them as with his professed enemies, even come downe in iudgement upon them, hew them in pieces, and give them their portion with hypocrites: wee must not onely take heed of this great strangeness and an open hostility, but beware that thou turne not so much as thy foot from the Lord, keepe thy selfe at home with him, frequent his house, and come often to his table, where thou mayest have familiar communion with him: for as we count him a stranger who seldome or never comes home unto us: so is he a stranger to the Lord who oftentimes absents himselfe from his house, and seldome or never comes to his table; and in that willfull staying himselfe from the house and table of the Lord, hee becomes an enemy to God, and takes up a banner against him, which is little thought on by many persons, who oftentimes upon no occasion absent themselves, and seldome, or scarce once a yeare or two, come to the Lords table. If a man should aske such persons whether they love God or no, they would scorne the question; but if they make answer, it would be readily this, O yes, they love the Lord, they would be sorry else. But wilt thou understand, O thou vaine man whosoever thou art, if thou wilt understand and consider it aright, know this, that thou art an enemy to God, whatsoever thou saiest to the contrary, thou art a stranger unto him, thou hast not that familiar and comfortable fellowship with God, that his people have in his house, and the Lord holds thee a stranger, and consequently an enemy unto him, and without repentance will indge and plague thee as one of his enemies. Think upon it whosoever thou art, that hast bin carelesse in frequenting the house and table of the Lord, and remember the words of the holy Ghost himselfe, Heb. 10. 38. *If any withdraw himselfe, my soule shall have no pleasure in him*. If any withdraw himselfe from the communion of Saints in the house of God, and so from communion with God himselfe, he withdraws himself from under the speciall providence of God he is not under the special tuition of the Lord, but only under his long suffering.

One thing more may hence bee observed, wee are to marke that the Apostle speaks not of the benefit of reconciliation alone, but with it, puts the Colossians in minde of their miserable estate, in which they stood before they were reconciled: the conclusion hence may bee generall, namely this, that (together with the mercy of God) we are ever to consider our owne misery: the Lords bounty in any good blessing bestowed on body or soule, should ever bring us to a consideration

Use 1.

We must take heed we be not any way estranged from God.

Note.

Doff. 5.

Together with Gods mercy towards us, we are ever to consider our owne misery.

Use.
it will make
truly humble,
and truly
thankfull to
God for
mercy.

Note.

*Interpreta-
tion.*

Consideration of our owne former wretchednesse, that is a rule of excellent use, the practice of it will make us truly humble, and truly thankfull to God for his mercy.

If the rich man who hath come up of small beginnings, would but thinke of the Lords present bounty, together with his owne former poverty, it would make him in all humility and thankfulness, to say with good *Iacob*, Gen. 32. 10 *I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staffe came I over this Iordan, and now have I gotten two bands.* And if with the blessing of our apparell, we did but consider our owne shame and sinne, upon which apparell was given (for it came in upon the fall) it would pull downe the pride of many in the world: here is a rule of direction for thee in respect of apparell.

Some say, you can give no speciall direction what manner of apparell wee are to weare, and of what fashion our apparell ought to bee, how much lace, fringe, gold or silver, &c. we are to put upon our apparell. Indeed it is true, the Scripture doth not set downe these particulars: but yet consider thou with thy apparell, thine owne misery, shame and desert by sin, and that will root out thy vaine delight in thy apparell: remember thy apparell is a badge of sin, and the desert of sin, and that will pull down thy pride, and make thee rather sigh, than swell with pride, as many as doe in respect of their apparell.

Come wee to the seat and subject of that enmity that was in the Colossians towards God before their reconciliation, namely, their mindes, and those ill affected in these words, *because your mindes were set in evill works.* The Apostles words in the originall, here translated *minds*, doth signifie agitation, or discourse mind and reason, whereby one thing is inferd upon another: as when the mind doth not simply apprehend, but deduce one thing upon another, that deduction is properly called *discourse*, discourse of minde and reason: and that is the Apostles word, whereby (no doubt) hee would have us to understand all the chiefe powers of the soule, namely, reason, will and affections: for as sound & true friendship amongst men stands not onely in consent of understanding, when men conceive the same things true or false, but in actuall consent of will and affections, and their enmity stands in the difference and dissent of mindes, will and affections; so is their enmity betweene God and men, when the mindes, wils and affections of men are opposite and against the will and wisdom of God, therefore by the word *minds*, we are to understand, reason, will and affections. *Were set*, these words are not expressed, but yet they are implied: the Apostle speaking of the Colossians in their naturall condition: for in saying, *their mindes in evill works*, he doth thereby give us to understand, that their mindes had not in them only that originall corruption, that is common to regenerate and unregenerate, (even the most regenerate having originall sinne remaining in them) but that they had in them actuall sinfulness, as dulnesse in their minds, ignorance, oblivion, perversenesse in their wils, forwardnes in their affections, and that the powers of their soules were wholly bent unto sin, therefore the words may well be rendred as they are, *because your mindes were set on evill works*, and the meaning of them is briefly this; because your reason, will and affections had in them actuall sinfulness, and were wholly bent and set upon sinne.

Now here first observe that the Apostle saith, the Colossians were enemies to God, not because their bodies were defiled with sinne, so that *their throats* was an open sepulcher, as hee speaks, Rom. 3. 13. 14. *their mouthes full of cursing and bitterness*, &c. though those things (no doubt) were common amongst them before their conversion, but because their mindes were set on evill works.

Doct. 6.
All sin begins
in the mind.

Hence we may gather, that the beginning, and (as it were) head and fountaine of all sin, is the mind: the inward faculties of the soule are first defiled, and from

from thence flow filthy streames of all actuall finnes. It is a point taught by Christ himselfe, Matth. 15, 28. that evill things which proceed out of the mouth, come from the heart: for out of the heart (saith he) come evill thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, slanders: where we see hee makes the heart (understanding by that, the inward powers of the soule) the roote and beginning of all evill. Hence it is that the Apostle doth so often urge renovation of minde, as Rom. 12. 2, *Be changed by the renewing of your minde.* Ephes. 4. 23 *Be renewed in the spirit of your minde.* 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Let us cleanse our selves from all filthinesse of the flesh and spirit, and grow up unto full holinesse in the feare of God.* And David prayed, Psal. 51. 10. *that the Lord would create a cleane heart within him:* and there is reason also to prove this, that the first and principall seat of sinne is the minde and soule, because all activiry and motion, good and bad, is from the soule, the body is but the instrument of the soule.

First, this serves to discover unto us, the error of the Papists, who teach that the first motions of the minde disordered, even the evill lust and concupiscence of the heart, without consent of will to accomplish evill is no sinne; this cannot stand with the truth now delivered: for if the mind and heart bee first defiled, and from thence comes actuall sinne, it must needs bee, that the first motions of the minde to evill, and the lust of the heart, though it be without consent, is sin, yea in the regenerate: and it may easily bee proved, for even the having of an evill thought in the minde, is repugnant and contrary to the law of God, and a fruit of corruption: it is such as wee should never have had, if wee had stood in the state of innocency: and therefore naught, and a sinne.

Yea, but saith the Papist, we reade, Iam. 1. 15. *that when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sinne:* marke (saith hee) concupiscence tempteth, and allureth by some evill motion, but that is no sinne till it doth conceive, that is obtaine some liking of the will in giving eare to it, and not expelling it.

To this I answer, that the Apostle saith not, that concupiscence is no sinne till it have conceived, that is but their glosse which corrupts the text: but the Apostle makes a distinction betweene concupiscence, and actuall sin, and saith, when it hath conceived it brings forth actuall sinne, (for sinne brought forth is actuall): and the Apostle speakes of the degrees by which actuall sinne is committed; as that at the first, lust enticeth, then followes consent, and that consent breakes out into action, action finished brings forth death: and that is the meaning of the Apostle, and so it still remaines a truth, that the first motion of the minde, and lust of the heart to evill, without consent, even of it selfe is sinne, though not in that height and kinde that outward actuall finnes are.

Secondly, is it so that every actuall sinne is as a streame issuing from the corrupt fountaine within, namely, the minde and inward faculties of the soule? then it behoves everyone to follow the counsell of the Wiseman, Prov. 4. 23. *Keepe thy heart with all diligence, for thereont cometh life.*

And in the first place, wee are to looke to the change and renovation of our mindes, and purging of our hearts. It is to small purpose for a man to cleanse his hand, his foot, his eyes, his tongue, &c. so long as his minde and heart remaine polluted and uncleane: there being a roote of bitterness in the heart and minde, it will ever be sending forth bitter and unsavoury fruits: yea, the greater and more excellent naturall gifts of minde a man hath, as wit capacity, &c. the fitter instruments hath he for the committing of sinne, if they bee not sanctified; and therefore above all we are to looke to our hearts.

And that we may see doe, we must not onely see grosse tentations, but labour to finde out our inward corruptions, and the privie tentations of Satan laid against our mindes. The Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 12. 11. *we must not be ignorant of his enterprises,* of his wiles and fetches, of his secret conveyance of sinne into our soules. For example, when Satan cannot fasten upon us either by violence or fraud,

Vse 1.
Confutation
of the Papists.

Object.

Answer.

Vse 2.

We are to keep
our hearts with
all diligence.

Note.

fraud to doe wrong to our brethren in regard of their goods. yet even then wee must not be secure, but stand upon our guard, and spie out whether he doth not cast into our mindes, a secret liking of the goods of our neighbour, tickling and deluding our hearts, and causing them to wish, Oh would such an house, such a field, such a plat of ground, such a servant, or the like were mine: for thus Satan will bee tempering with our hearts, and thus many times convey sinne into them, when wee see it not, nor thinke not of it. Saint *Paul* himselfe thought not of the danger of this secret desire of heart, till hee came to behold himselfe in the glasse of the last commandment, Rom. 7. 7. Wee must therefore labour to finde out these privie tentations, and fortifie, strengthen and guard our hearts against them, and repell them, and not suffer them to enter. Men that looke not into their owne hearts, and finde not out the corruption of them, and watch not most narrowly over them, but onely abstaine from outward grosse finnes (as most men if they come so farre thinke all is well) the Lord many times deales with them proportionably, even in this life hee laies his heavy hand upon the inward soule, and torments the minde when the body is neither sicke nor sore: for it is iust with the Lord, wherein we sinne thereto to punish in. As the Heathen regarded not to know God, so the Lord in his iust iudgement gave them unto a reprobate minde, to doe those things which are not convenient, Rom. 1. 28. as their sinne was in their minds, so his punishment seized and settled upon their minds. Let this stirre us up to labour to search our owne hearts, and to finde out the privie assaults of Satan laid against them, and to arme our selves against them.

The next thing we have to marke, is, that the Apostle saith, their minds were set in evill workes, or were in evill, their minds were as it were hemd in and enclosed with sinne before their conversion.

Doct. 7.
Such as be yet uncalled and not actually reconciled to God, are in the greatest bondage that may be.

Vse.
Thankfulnessse to God for deliverance out of that thraldome, and care to hasten out of it being in it.

Motives to that purpose.

Hence wee are taught, that such as are yet uncalled, and are not actually reconciled to God, they are in the greatest bondage that possibly can bee, their mindes and all the inward powres of their soules, are enthralled in the bondage of sinne, which is the greatest bondage that can bee: for why? even a gally slave under the Turke, though hee bee in extreame hard servitude and bondage, yet his minde may bee at liberty, free from the chaines of sinne: but hee that is uncalled, and yet in his naturall state, his minde is fettered and chained with sinne, so as he cannot thinke, will, or affect any thing but sinne: and this ought to bee considered, both to teach such as are called out of the state of their naturall bondage, into the liberty of the sonnes of God, to bee thankfull to God for his mercie, and to stirre up others to hasten by all good meanes out of that miserable thraldome: and that they may have a true apprehension of their miserie, and be stirred up to hasten out of it, let them consider these few things.

First, he that is in his naturall state, is a slave to God himselfe, and that is cleare by his slavish feare: for he cannot feare God as a childe of God.

Secondly, he is a slave to good men, such as feare God, and in whom the graces of God appeare, they have and hold a kinde of soveraignty over him, it is even as hell to him to be in their company.

Thirdly, he is a slave to the world, and to the creatures in the world, as the covetous man to his gold, some to the starres; some to daies; as forsooth, this is a dismall day, and therefore they may not take in hand any businesse that day; some to the flying of a Crow, the crossing of an Hare, and the like.

Fourthly he is a slave to himselfe, either to his body, as the glutton and drunkard; or to the passions of his soule, as lust, anger, envie; or to his conscience, and that in respect of accusation, testimony and torment: his conscience accusing for sinne, maketh him thinke every thing else doth accuse him, as the birds and such like; his conscience giving testimony of the truth, many times against himselfe,

himselfe, as *Moses* saith, Deut. 32. 31. their God is not as our God, even our enemies being iudges, his conscience tormenting him, so as many times it makes him his owne butcher.

These things well considered, they are able to move any man, and will indeed move him that belongs to God to looke about him, and if he finde himselfe in his naturall state, to hasten out of it. and that we deceive not our selves, (as many doe) thinking they are delivered from their naturall state, when they are not, let us examine our selves by this one rule.

See whether thou hast suffered an holy and heavenly violence, in respect of thy best pleasing sinne, to which thou art most naturally inclined: if thou finde that the spirit of God working by the word, hath drawne thee from under the power and tyranny of that sinne, that thou hast not now such pleasure in it, but thou dost strive against it, and avoid occasions leading unto it, then thou art entred into the way of life. But if thou finde thy selfe held in that snare of the devill (as the Apostle speakes, 2 Timoth. 2. 26.) at his will, that so soone as occasion is offered, thou dost apprehend it, and that with much pleasure and delight; then surely I can give thee no comfort, but let thee understand, that *Cain* and *Judas* were as neere heaven as yet thou art. Let this bee thought on and remembered.

Verf. 22. *In the body of his flesh through death, to make you holy and unblameable, and without fault in his sight.*

Verf. 22.

Here wee have part of that proposition, that is laid before us in these two verses, expressing the materiall cause of the reconciliation of the Colossians to God, in these words, [*In the body of his flesh through death*] then follows the second amplification of the Apostles proposition, from the end of their reconciliation in the next words, [*to make you holy and unblameable, and without fault in his sight.*]

Come we to the first of these [*In the body*] parts, in the body of his Sonne Christ (it is added) of his flesh, to let us understand that Christ had and hath a true humane body, a body of flesh and blood, like unto ours in all things, signe onely excepted [*through death*] that is through death of that body: and so the words are thus to bee conceived, as if the Apostle had said. In the true humane body of Christ his Sonne, delivered to death, crucified and broken upon the Crosse. I might here stand to shew that Christ his body crucified was, and (now glorified in heaven) is a true substantiall body, a body of flesh taken from the substance of the Virgin *Mary* his mother, and not a phantaslicall body, a body in appearance only, a mathematicall or maiesticks body, as the *Ubi-quistaries* foolishly call it, who affirme that Christ his body (by reason of the personall union) is every where present: but to passe by that. Observe wee that the Apostle said, verf. 20. It pleased the Father to reconcile all things unto himselfe, and to set at peace through the blood of his crosse, and heere bee saith that the Colossians were reconciled in the body of his flesh. Hence ariseth this point of instruction.

That both the body and blood of Christ is the price of redemption, and the matter of reconciliation: and when we read that we have remission of finnes through the blood of Christ, we must understand the whole passion of Christ, even his body broken, and his blood shed, a point that need not bee stood upon for the prooffe of it (no question) we easily conceive and condescend to the truth of it: yet it is not needlesse to be remembered, it may serve to direct our faith touching the death of Christ, that we are to eye by faith the body & blood of Christ for the remission of our sin. We finde it taught by Christ himselfe, that to the nourishment of our soules to life eternall, wee are by faith to feed both

Interpret.

Dof. 1.
Both the Body
and blood of
Christ be the
price of re-
demption.

Use.

We are to eye
by faith the
body and blood
of Christ for
the remission
of our finnes.

Confutation
of the Papists.

on his body and blood, John 6. 53. *Except ye eat the flesh of the sonne of man, and drinke his blood, ye have no life in you :* and in the next verse, *Whosoever eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternall life.* And our Saviour hath ordained in the Sacrament of the Supper, our ward visible signes, both bread and wine, to represent and bring to our remembrance both his body and blood, and to signifie unto us, that Christ is directly set before us in the Sacrament, as meate and drinke, and as perfect spirituall nourishment to our soules ; yea, Bellarmine himselfe, the Arch-pillar of the Roman Synagogue, saith in plaine termes, that the forme of bread alone doth not exactly represent Christ as dead, unlesse withall there be scene his blood as shed, and the forme of wine alone doth not sufficiently represent Christ as sacrificed, for (saith hee) onely blood is no sacrifice: wickedly therefore deale the Papists : wee may conclude against them out of their owne mouthes, who in the Sacrament of the Supper take away the cup from the people, and will not suffer them to have it : beside the breach of the institution of the Sacrament, they goe flat against the doctrine of the Apostle, concerning one principall use of the Sacrament, which is to shew forth the death of Christ, which is lively done, when both bread and wine are delivered, one for the flesh, the other for the blood, and not otherwise : and therefore hee saith, 5 Cor. 11. 26. *As often as yee shall eat this bread and drinke this cup, yee shew the Lords death till he come :* yea, they are no lesse commanding speeches, ver. 18. *Let a man eat of this bread and drinke of this cup,* than, that is: let a man examine himselfe. It is therefore sacrilegious in the highest degree, to withhold the cup from the people, it destroyeth the integrity and soundnesse of the Sacrament, and leaves to the people but a maimed and halfe matter of spirituall nourishment in Christ, and an halfe satisfaction of their sinne, which is most wicked and damnable. Let us therefore hold fast, and reioyce in the perfect and most full ordinance of Christ, in that both bread and wine are delivered unto us : and let us not forgoe the comfort wee may have in this point, that they are visible signes of the body and blood of Christ, and doe signifie, that by faith we feede upon whole Christ, both his body and blood, for remission of our finnes, the perfect nourishment of our soules to life eternall.

One thing further is offered unto us from these words, I have heretofore spoken of it, ver. 14. therefore I will onely now recall it to memory. The Apostle saith not simply, *in the body of his flesh,* but addes through death, as before (*the blood of the crosse.*)

Hence we are taught, that we are not to fasten the eyes of our mind upon the body and blood of Christ simply, but upon his body broken, and his blood shed especially when we come to the Sacrament of the Lords Supper. Wouldst thou receive grace, comfort, salvation, or any blessing from the Lord ? come then to Christ hanging, bleeding, and dying upon the crosse, if thou come not to God by Christ, and by him suffering and bleeding on the crosse (as one saith wel) there is no hearing God, no helping God, no saving God, no God of mercy to thee at all.

Come wee to the second amplification of the Apostles proposition, in the words following (*To make you holy and unblameable, and without fault in his sight.*) The word (*holy*) to omit other acceptions of it, doth here signifie pure, cleane from all spot of sinne: for so the next words doe expound it unblameable and without fault. The word (*unblameable*) is given to Christ, he is said to be a lambe undefiled, Pet. 1. 19. There is the same word that here is used : when therefore the Apostle saith, *to make you holy,* and addes further (*unblameable and without fault.*) His meaning is this, to make you pure and cleane, so as you can not iustly bee challenged, blamed, or reproved for any spot of sinne. Now this holinesse is two-fold, either by imputation of Christ his holinesse, or inherent in us, and that is onely begun in this life, and shall bee consummate, and made

Doct. 2.

Christ his body broken, and his blood shed, ought to be the object of our faith.

Use.

Grace, comfort and every good thing, comes from God, through the death of Christ.

Interpret.

made perfect in the life to come : and that the Apostle doth meane, not onely the first, but also the second, it is cleare by the like place, Ephes. 5. 26: 27. where he sets it out in the same termes, and saith, It is wrought by the washing of water through the word : therefore inherent holinesse is onely begun in this life, and to bee made perfect, when wee shall personally see before the Lord, and shall see him face to face in heaven, so much also the Apostles phrase doth imply. Thus then the words are to be conceived, to set you before his owne face free from all spot of sinne by imputation of Christs holinesse : and by holinesse inherent begun in this life to be made perfect when you shall see the Lord face to face in heaven.

Here first we are to marke, that the Apostle saith, the end why the Lord did reconcile the Colossians to himselfe, communicating unto them the Merit of Christ his death, it was to make them holy. Hence ariseth this conclusion, that reconciliation with God, and holinesse even inherent begun in this life ever goe together. Whosoever is reconciled to God by the death of Christ, is in some measure sanctified, and hath holinesse begun in him in this life : for its the end the Lord doth propound to himselfe in reconciling men unto himselfe, and can the Lord be disappointed of his end ? What shall withstand him ? Again, it is one end of the death of Christ to purge from sinne, *He gave himselfe*, saith the Apostle, *to redeeme from iniquity, and to purge us to bee a peculiar people unto himselfe zealous of all good workes.* Tit. 2:14.

Therefore to whomsoever Christ is a Saviour by merit, to him also hee is a Saviour by efficacy, these two are ever undivided.

Now then is it so, that reconciliation with God, and holinesse ever goe together ? how then doe they deceive themselves, who thinke that the merit of Christ his death belongs to them, and yet have not any measure of holinesse in them : nay, whatsoever is holy, they even hate to be drawne to it, whatsoever is unholy, they wallow in it, they tumble in it, they ioy in it, yea, they even wish to live in it, and grow old in it ? Such there bee too many, and yet they fancy to themselves, that the merit of Christ belongs to them, which indeed is a meere fancy, helped forward by strong delusion of the devill. I may bee bold to tell thee whosoever thou art (for the Lord himselfe hath taught mee so to speake) Heb. 12. 14. If thou live not in some measure an holy life here, thou shalt never see the face of God to thy comfort and salvation, thou shalt see him indeed but to thy shame and confusion ; so as thou shalt call to the mountaines to fall on thee, and hide thee, (but in vaine) from his presence. Let our meditation a little settle on this point, and let us often thinke upon the difference of holines and prophaneesse : the one proving unto us everlasting ioy with God when this life shall bee ended : and the other assured woe with the devill and his Angels, in the bottomlesse pit of hell for ever. If we thoroughly thinke of this difference, we shall finde it a piercing argument to prick us forward to an holy life, it will doubtlesse force from us one of these conclusions.

Now live like a Christian amongst men, and ever live like a Saint among the Angels in heaven, or now soke in sin, and wallow in filthy pleasure for a season and then rot in the reward of it, an everlasting curse from the presence of the Lord, in the pit of everlasting perdition.

One thing more, briefly note we, the Apostle saith, not to make you onely holy, but addes further unblameable, and without fault in his sight.

Hence we may gather, that where the Lord hath begun true holinesse, there he will make it perfect, whom he hath begun to sanctifie, he will fully perfect in the end : and this is further cleare by that prayer of the Apostle, 1 Thes. 5. 23. *Now the very God of peace sanctifie you throughout.* This was a prayer of faith, he was perswaded the Lord Would sanctifie them, as himselfe saith, Philip. 1. 6. *I was perswaded of this same thing, that he that hath begun this good worke in you,*

Dott. 3.

Reconciliation with God, and holinesse inherent goe together.

Use.

They deceive themselves, who thinke they have part in the merit of Christ his death, and yet want holinesse.

Dott. 4.

The Lord having begun true holinesse in any, will perfect it.

will

Use.

Comfort to
them in whom
the Lord hath
begunne the
least measure
of true holi-
nesse.

will performe it untill the day of Iesus Christ. And this is a notable comfort to all such, in whom the Lord hath begun the least measure of true holinesse, they may be sure he will perfect it.

Some complaine of the want of sanctification (an holy complaint found but in few) yet some thus complaine, that they finde a dulnesse and deadnesse in respect of all good motions, and the devill taking advantage upon this, many times perswades them, they are fallen away, and God hath given them over. Such must know, it is a course ever held by the Lord, it is that which Gods chosen have ever tasted: yet without reiection, they have had alterations in them, sometimes sweet motions in their soules, sometimes deadnesse and dulnesse of heart. What change thinke you felt *David*, when he cryed, *Psalme 51. 11. Ob cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thine holy Spirit from me.* If ever thou hast had the first fruits of the Spirit, an hatred of thine owne sinne, a purpose of not sinning in any thing, though now deadnesse possesse thine heart, yet content thy selfe, and waite for full holinesse in time to bee given: the Lord hath once begun holinesse in thee, and he will perfect it. It is an excellens place, and to be remembred of us, *Gal. 5. 5. We through the Spirit, waite for the hope of righteousness through faith.* The Apostle saith not, they which are iustified doe in the spirit of faith yet feeble the hope of righteousness, but they wait still for it. So thou in the midst of conflicts and terrours, which often assault thee, waite patiently for righteousness, and in time it shall bee revealed and made perfect unto thee in the kingdome of heaven.

Verf. 22. If ye continue grounded and stablished in the faith, and bee not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, whereof ye have heard, and which hath been preached to every creature which is under heaven, whereof I Paul am a Minister.

The relation of this verse to the former, stands thus, if yee continue in the faith, yee shall bee set in the sight of God holy and unblameable, therefore continue in it, and so it also containes the first argument, by which the Apostle labours to perswade the Colossians to continuance in the faith taught by the Gospel: for here begins the fourth part of this Chapter, containing an exhortation to continuance in the faith, urged by sundry arguments to the end of the chapter: and the first argument is this.

If ye continue in the faith, yee shall obtaine the end of your faith, the salvation of your soules: and this is not barely propounded, but amplified by the manner of continuance, in these words, *grounded and stablished*, and further cleared by the proper passion, or by the property of such as are *grounded and stablished*, that they suffer not themselves to bee moved away from the truth, in the next words, (and bee not moved away from the Gospel) Then follows the meanes how they came to have that hope of the Gospel (namely) by hearing the Gospel preached, and least they should except and say, the Gospel that we heard, we heard it only of *Epaphras* our Minister, and wee may doubt whether it be the true Gospel of Christ or no. This objection the Apostle prevents by two arguments.

That first it was the same that was preached throughout the world.

And secondly, the same that *Paul* preached, and whereof he was a Minister: which hath beene preached to every creature, which is under heaven, whereof *I Paul am a Minister.* Come we to the words of this verse, as they are laid downe by the Apostle: and first of these words (*if ye continue grounded and stablished in the faith*) the conditionall note (*if*) doth not here imply doubting in the Apostle of the continuance of true beleevers in their faith, as of an uncertaine event: but the excellency and difficulty of their undoubted continuance and

The fourth
part of this
chapter, an
exhortation
to continue in
the true faith.

Interpretation

and the Apostles earnest desire of the same, and that appears in that he thereunto perswades by many arguments, we finde the word so used in many places of the Scriptures. Looke one for many, Phil. 3. 11. *If by any means I might attaine unto the resurrection of the dead.* The Apostle doth not there doubt of his resurrection, but by that conditionall note makes it knowne, how excellent and good a thing it was, and how exceeding much of him desired.

In the faith. By faith we are to understand the gift of faith, together with the matter of it, namely, the doctrine of Faith, the Gospell: for the Apostle here speaks of the gift of faith, with reference to the doctrine of faith, as he explaines himselfe in the next words, [*hope of the Gospell grounded and stablished*] the words are Metaphoricall, borrowed from knowne things. The first, from an house built on a sure foundation. The second, from such as doe sit fast in a sure sear, to signifie the firme and constant resolution and condition of true beleivers: thus then the words are to be construed and conceived.

If yee continue firme and constant in the faith wrought in you by the Gospell.

Now for the ground of the first instruction, wee are to marke that the Apostle, verf. 4. said, hee heard of the faith of the Colossians, and here hee perswades them to continuance in faith: the generall conclusion following hence, is this:

That we must not onely begin well, but we must also continue in goodnesse to the end.

The Lord doth require us that wee not only like of good and godly motions for a time, and after suffer them to vanish, to be quenched and die in us, but that we so begin that we may continue, and so continue in goodnesse that wee may endure to the end. To this purpose we finde many exhortations, as *Quench not the Spirit*, 1 Thes. 5. 19. Stirre up the gifts that are in you, as fire is stirred up with blowing, 2 Tim. 1. 6. and stand fast in the faith, 1 Cor. 16. 13. the equity and reason hereof is twofold.

First, because the Lord respects the fruit, and not the blossome, he calls himselfe *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the end, in many places of the Revelation, and therefore hee requires a good end, as well as a good beginning.

Secondly, it is the property of true vertue, not only to begin well, but also to end well. *Paul* blames the Galathians, chap. 3. 3. that having begun in the Spirit, would be made perfect by the flesh: and our Saviour shewes what shame it is to him that begins to build, and cannot finish his worke, Luk. 14. 30. *This man began to build, and was not able to make an end.*

To begin well, and not to continue, brings shame, and therefore it is no true vertue: for the crowne of that is glory, not shame.

Before we come to urge this duty, it will not be amisse to shew some speciall meanes how we may continue in goodnesse begun in us, for the meanes to that purpose are not onely generall; as diligent hearing and reading of the Word, Prayer, Sacraments, conference, good company, &c. but also more speciall, such as serve peculiarly for the continuance and preservation of some particular grace begun in us; for example.

A speciall meanes for continuance of humility begun in our hearts, is a continuall meditation of our own vilenesse and corruption, a looking on the good things of other men, as well as on our owne good things, Phil. 2. 4. A consideration of our owne grosse finnes.

A thorow examination without partiall affection of the reports other men make of us.

So a speciall meanes to continue love to the Word of God when it is begun in us, is,

Doff. 1.
Wee must not onely beginne well, but also continue in goodnesse.

Reason 1.

2

Speciall means for continuance of humility begun in us.
Speciall means to continue love to Gods Word begun in us.

P

First,

1

First, to labour to have a lively sense and feeling of the sweetness of the Word: For the more we feele the comfort of it, the more we shall be enflamed with a love to it.

2

Secondly, to keepe daily observation of the accomplishment of the truth of it in our selves, or others; either in the mercies of God promised to them that feare him, or to the judgements of God threatned against the wicked.

Thus we finde that *David's* love to the Word was increased and continued, *Psal. 119. 96, 97. I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding large:* then it followes in the next verse; *O how love I thy Law, it is my meditation continually.* As if he had said; all things in the world, even the most perfect come to an end, but not one jot or tittle of the Word of God faileth, but all is accomplished: oh therefore, *how love I thy Word?* I might thus goe on in many particulars; but by this that hath beene said, we have some light given us, what speciall meanes we are to use for the continuance of any grace already begun in us.

Now touching the continuance of love to the Word, men have need a little to be rowzed; for now generally men begin to decline, and to fall from their first love, as the holy Ghost speaks, *Rev. 2. 4.* We see the truth is of such majesty in it selfe, as it captiveth the hearts of very reprobates unto a liking of it, but it is onely as a flash of lightning, that comes, and is gone almost in a moment. That men therefore may be stirred up to continue their love and liking of the Word of God, let them consider these two things:

Motives to stir
us up to conti-
nue love to the
Word of God.

First, as it is not any sinne, but continuance in that sinne without repentance till death, that brings damnation. So it is not any good in us, nor done by us that shall in mercy be rewarded, unlesse we continue in it to the end: only continuance in well doing (without totall or finall falling from it) shall be crowned: *be faithfull to the death, saith Christ to the Church of Smyrna, Rev. 2. 10. and I will give thee the crown of life.*

Motive 1.

Againe, consider that his condition is better that never begun to doe well, than his who once begun, and then falls wholly from it. For that is like a relapse into some great sicknesse, which we know is most dangerous: it is the doctrine of Christ himselfe, *Matth. 12. 45.* that the last state of that man is worse than the beginning: and there is reason for it, for then followes hardnesse, impenitencie, and a greater weight of condemnation: yea, it is dangerous to fall from grace, though it be but in part: it made *Paul* in doubt of the Galatians, *chap. 4. vers. 20.* If then we would not lose our labour, and misse our reward: if we would not fall into such a state, as is farre worse than if we had never begun to doe well, bringing with it hardnesse of heart, and greater condemnation: let as many as have any love to the Word, or love to their brethren, any zeale of Gods glory, or other grace begun in them: labour by all good meanes to continue and increase in the same. Shall the wicked be more constant in wickednesse, than we in the feare of the Lord? They serve the devill, their owne lusts, and their reward shall be hell; and shall they be more constant in the service of the devill, than we in the service of our gracious God? Let it shame us: of this we ought to be ashamed indeed.

The next thing we have to marke, is the order of the words of the Apostle, speaking of the manner of continuance in the faith, hee saith; *grounded and stablished.*

Doct. 2.

Wee must first
be grounded in
faith, before we
can bee stabli-
shed in it.

Hence wee are taught, that wee must first be grounded in faith, before wee can be established. First, wee must be firmly settled in the doctrine of the Gospell, before we can be stable and constant in the profession of the Gospell. For why? in common reason wee know it to be true, that there is no constant stability but upon firme ground: an house, or other building never stands stable or constant upon rotten ground, or on a sandie foundation: and with
this

this agrees that of *James*, chap. 1. 8. *A wavering minded man is unstable in all his wayes*: the mind and heart being double and deceitfull, the whole course of the life is answerable: it behoves every one therefore to bee well grounded in the doctrine of the Gospell: yea, such as are ignorant must bee content, and thinke it no shame in their old age to learne the Catechisme, and first grounds of religion. And to perswade the necessity of this duty, consider with me, that such as are ignorant, and not well grounded in the knowledge of the truth, they lie open as a prey to Atheists and Papists. We see now the Papists gather ground upon us: and no marvell, because people are not well grounded in the truth: the Jesuiticall deceivers, and Romish rabble, besides their subtilty of wit, whereby they are fit to deceive; they set many faire colours upon their cunning perswasions: as first, Scripture, but that by addition, detraction, or some allegoricall sense and glosse depraved. Secondly, depth of learning, as *Christ* speaks of the deepnesse of *Satan*, *Revel.* 2. 24. and that confirmed by revelations. Thirdly, great and glorious titles, of Apostolicall succession and antiquity. Fourthly, humility in voluntary subjection, and not sparing the body, as wee read in the second Chapter of this Epistle, *vers.* 13. Fifthly, fained and lying miracles, *2 Thess.* 2. 9. Sixthly, flattering and faire speech, of which the Apostle speaks, *Rom.* 16. 18. Last of all, obstinate suffering of death, wherein they much glory; and how shall a silly unstable soule withstand these things? surely (without the great mercy of God) it is not possible; therefore men have need to bee well grounded. Againe, consider that such as are not well grounded in the truth, they profit little or nothing by Sermons; a Sermon to them, is like a great loafe set before little children: they stand and wonder at the Preacher, but profit little or nothing by the word preached; and if they see some men of note fall from true religion, then they beginne to stagger, and are distracted into sundry cogitations, and say; there be so many opinions as they know not what to hold: *Peter* playing the Jew, other Jewes dissemble with him; yea, *Barnabas* is brought into their dissimulation also, *Gal.* 2. 13. We see then the necessity of this duty, that it is needfull to be grounded in the truth. Let us therefore never rest till we truly understand the grounds and principles of religion, and be settled, and fully resolve of the truth of them, that so wee may follow the truth in love of the truth, as the Apostle speaks, *Ephes.* 4. 5. and that wee may cheerfully embrace it, and constantly hold it both in life and death.

For the grounding of the next point we are to marke, the Apostle saith not, if faith be grounded in you, *but if ye continue grounded in the faith.*

Hence I gather, that faith must not be built, and (as it were) set upon our hearts, which, as the Prophet saith, *Jer.* 17. 9. *are deceitfull tottering seats*, rotten foundations: but our hearts must be built and set upon faith, as upon a firme foundation, we must rise up as a building riseth from the ground, upon the foundation of faith, that is, upon the doctrine of faith, upon the doctrine of religion, and the feare of God, taught and comprised in the writings of the Prophets and Apostles: in which sense it is said in expresse termes, that the Ephesians were built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, *Ephes.* 2. 20. that is, upon their doctrine. And *Jude* in his Epistle, *vers.* 20. exhorteth to build our selves in our holy faith; and the Apostle *Paul* taking his leave of the Church of Ephesus, *Act.* 20. 32, commendeth them to God, and to the word of his grace, which (saith he) is able to build further, &c. These (and many other places of like sort) doe meet together in this point of instruction.

That our heart must be built upon the doctrine of faith, namely, the Gospell, yea, generally upon the whole Word, as a sure foundation, and not the Word upon our hearts.

Some may say, how is this to be done?

I answer, first, by beleiving the Word, for though the doctrine of the Word

Use.

Ignorant persons must suffer themselves to be catechised in their old age.

Seven faire deceiving colours of the Papists.

Note.

Doff. 3.

Faith must not be built on our hearts, but our hearts must be built upon faith, as a firme foundation.

Quest. Answer.

bee a foundation in it selfe, yet it is not so to us, unlesse wee beleeeve it : by faith wee are coupled and knit to this foundation, and it is made a foundation to us.

Secondly, by yeelding obedience unto it, for so our Saviour saith, Mat. 7. 24. *He that heareth of me these words, and doth the same he is a builder upon the Word; yea, a wise builder, he builds upon it as upon a rocke.*

Wee see then that this duty is cleared, and the manner how to performe it made knowne unto us.

Vse 1.
Confutation of
the Papists.

First, is this our duty, to build our selves upon the Gospell, and generally upon the Word? then certainly, wee are not (as the Papists teach) to build upon the Church as upon a foundation. They teach, that we are to ground and stablish our selves upon the authority of the Church, and shame not to say, there can be no certainty of the points of religion, no nor yet of the Scriptures themselves, but only by the judgement of the present Church of Rome: this is contrary to the doctrine now delivered and proved, and this makes the Church the foundation of Scripture, and not the Scripture the foundation of the Church, as indeed it is, and every member of the Church (according to the doctrine of the Apostle) must be grounded upon it.

Object.

Yea, but saith the Papist, how shall we know Scripture to be Scripture, but by the Church? the Church doth determine which is Scripture, therefore the authority of the Church is greater than Scripture, and in this respect as a foundation: and the determination of Scripture to be Scripture, is built on the universall consent of the Church:

Answer.

I answer this with a like question: How shall wee know the Church to bee the Church but by the Scripture? yea, doubtlesse the Scripture must needs first point out the Church, and that being knowne, it determineth of the number of the books of Scripture, yet by Scripture; and so Scripture is ever the first ground and foundation.

Againe, universall consent of the Church doth not perswade the conscience that Scripture is Scripture: It is not a sufficient ground to build upon, but only as an inducement, it doth move to a reverend regard of the writings of the Apostles and Prophets, and thus saith *Augustine: Non credidissim Scriptura, nisi me commovisset autoritas Ecclesie.*

Vse 2.
Reproofe of
them that will
have the Word
of God fitted
to their hearts.

Is it so, that our hearts must be built on the Word, and not the Word upon our hearts? then such persons are farre short of their duty, they come within compasse of reproofe, who will have the Word to bee fitted and framed to their hearts, and not their hearts to the Word: this is to build the Word on their hearts, and not their hearts on the Word, and (indeed) to turne the speech of the holy Ghost to their owne fancie, and to temper the Word to their owne humour, to set downe their own conclusion, and then force the Word to prove it. You will say, is there any such? too many without question: is it not thus with the Usurer, one grounded in that sinne, will not he (notwithstanding any reproofe by plaine evidence of Scripture) still hold his conclusion, and resolve to continue in his sinne, and to that purpose take paines to seeke out places of Scripture, not to checke his sinne, and to build him up in holy reformation; but such as may seeme to him (blinded with the love of his gaine) to favour his sinne? Is it not thus with the drunkard, the unclean person, or any other grosse and grounded sinner? yes surely, as one saith, no face is so foule, but it shall finde a painter: no sinne is so grosse, but some grounded in that sinne, will seeke to set a faire colour upon it; and not onely a common colour, as to call covetousnesse good husbandry; pride, cleanness; but (which is most wicked) to fetch painting out of the Word of God. Whence (I beseech you) comes all extenuation of sinne? Whence is it that men quarrell and wrangle about the nature, the greatnesse, the quality, or desert of sinne, and say their sinne is not

not so great as Preachers would make it: but even from hence, that they are tempering with some place of Scripture to fit that to their owne corrupt humours, and to make that serve for extenuation of their sinne: (for example) some are to bold with that of the Apostle, 1 Pet. 4.8. *Love covereth the multitude of sinnes*: they frame and construe too much to their owne liking, even to backe them in their concealment and smothering of some grosse sinnes, which they ought to discover and make knowne, that they might be punished. To perswade therefore to the contrary duty.

That we labour to frame our hearts to the Word, as the building to the foundation, and not the Word to our hearts in any part or parcell of it, consider we these two things.

First, such as frame the Word to our hearts, to abet them in any sin, and not their hearts to the rule of the Word, the Lord in his just judgement gives them up to follow the counsels of their owne hearts, yea, so farre, as if they aske their owne hearts whether they shall goe on in the way to the devill, they answer as false Prophets use to doe, *goe and prosper*, they answer without checks and controulment, *goe*, it was *Ababs* case, 1 King. 13. In respect of temporary destruction: he would have the Word of the Lord framed to the pleasing of his owne fancie, going on in his owne course; therefore the Lord gave him up to follow the liking of his owne heart, and not to take counsell with *Micah* the true Prophet, verl. 8. but with such as pleased his humour, who bid him goe and prosper, when he went to his owne destruction.

Againe, consider that such as frame the Word to their hearts to maintaine them in sinne, they breake that commandement, Deut. 12.32. they either put something to the Word, or take something from it, by wrong construction, or application, they either adde or detract, or else it would have some to boulder out sinne, and then in what case they stand let them see even liable to all the plagues written in the booke of God, and to have their portion taken out of the booke of life Rev. 22.18, 19. If then we would not be given over to the lust of our owne hearts, to follow it to our owne destruction, if we would not have our portion taken out of the booke of God, and stand subject to all the plagues that are written in the booke of God, let us take heed, we never goe about to frame the Word to the corruption of our hearts to uphold us in sin, but let us frame our hearts, and make them pliable to beleve and obey the Word in all things: yea, never give thy selfe rest, till the Word lie under thine heart, even hid, as *David* saith, Psalm. 119.1 as a foundation on which all thy affections and actions are grounded and built, and pray ever with *David* in the same Psalm, verl. 26. *Enclina bend down mine bowe unto thy testimonies*; and not thy testimonies to my heart.

Now to the words following: *And be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel* by hope of the Gospel, we are not to understand the thing hoped for, namely, life and glory in heaven, as verl. 5. but the gift and grace of hope wrought in the heart by the Gospel, which is a certaine and patient expectation of life eternall, purchased by the active and passive obedience of Christ, and promised in the Gospel to all that truly beleve in him: and not to be moved away from it, is not to lose it, nor to let it fall out of our hearts: and so the words are briefly thus to be conceived: And lose not your certaine and patient expectation of life eternall, purchased by the perfect obedience of Christ, and promised in the Gospel to all that truly beleve in him.

The first thing wee have to marke from these words is, that the Apostle makes it the property of such as are surely grounded and established in the true faith, not to bee moved away from a certaine expectation of life eternall.

Hence we conclude, that true beleevers may have, and have indeed a certain

Motives to stir us up to frame our hearts to the Word of God.

1

2

Interpret.

The hope of
true beleevers
is a certaine
and patient
expectation
of life eternall

Doct. 4.

True beleevers may, and doe certainly looke for eternall life.

Object.

Ans.

Use.
A sure foundation of comfort to all true beleevers.

Decis. 5.
The hope of true beleevers shall at rne time or other be assaulted.

Note.

and immoveable hope of life eternall, they certainly look for life and salvation, for why? hope is the daughter of faith, and true faith being a necessary fruit ever following election; as appeares plainly, Act. 13. 48. and for an infallible argument of confirmation to the soule of him in whom it is, that hee is elected to life and salvation, it must needs bring forth an hope correspondent and answerable unto it, even a certaine expectation of that which is undoubtedly beleaved.

Again, the hope of true beleevers comes from the testimony of the Spirit, and is one of the fruits of Gods Spirit, as might be proved at large, and therefore it is certaine and sure.

Yea but saith the Papist, true faith may be lost, the testimony of the Spirit may be extinct, the fruits of grace may wither and come to nothing; how then can any man build on these grounds certaine & never-failing hope of life eternall: see the boldnesse of carnall reason, when men trust to that, and want the guidance of Gods Spirit: what is it but to call into question the promise of God, the deeds of our blessed Saviour, the prayer of Christ, the eternall love of God, and his unchangeable decree of saving some? For why? we come to have certaine expectation of life eternall by true faith, and the testimony of the Spirit of God, and that grounded on the promise of God, who is faithfull, and cannot deceive us, upon the deeds of Christ, together with whom as many as truly beleeve are quickned and raised, and made to sit in certaine hope of heavenly possession, Eph. 2. 5, 6. upon the prayer of our Saviour that could not bee in vaine, but was heard of his heavenly Father, Joh. 17. 20, 21. upon the eternall love of God, from which nothing can divide us, Rom. 8. 39. upon the unchangeable decree of God that stands fast for ever, sealed with this seale, *The Lord knoweth who are his*, 2 Tim. 1. 19.

Let not then any enemy of Gods grace, thinke that hee is able to raze the foundation of comfort: no, no, as many as truly beleeve, and have the witness of Gods Spirit, and the fruits of his grace, have a certaine and immoveable hope of life eternall, and may rejoyce with joy unspeakable and glorious, as saith the Apostle, 1 Pet. 1. 8. and bee thankfull to God for this inestimable gift, knowing this, the gates of hell shall never bee able to prevail against them.

For concluding of the next point, wee are to marke the phrase and forme of speech used by the Apostle: he saith not, and lose not by carelesse negligence, but be not moved away from the hope of the Gospell: this by necessary implication pointeth out the state and condition of such as have certaine hope of life eternall, namely this, that their hope shall at one time or other bee assaulted, there shall bee ever enemies that will set upon it, and labour to drive them from their hold: yea, (saith *Luther*) as soone as wee lay hold upon Christ by faith, and certainly looke for salvation by him, forth with our enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devill rise up against us, hating and persecuting us most cruelly, both in body and soule, and they use their greatest skill, and bend their chiefest force, especially against our hope and expectation of life eternall.

Hence it is, that the hope of true Christians is compared by the Apostle to an helm, Eph. 6. 17. which (as we know) is a chiefe part of a souldiers furniture, provided to defend his head, and put on to receive blowes given against his head: in which similitude is also implied one speciall reason, why the enemies of salvation doe chiefly set upon hope, and labour to move us away from our hope of eternall life, because therein they strike at the head, even the head of all comfort, as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 15. 19. *If in this life onely wee have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most miserable.* If our hope be confined to this life onely, if our hope of eternall life be cut off, then farewell all the comfort of a

Christian,

Christian, yea, therein they strike at the head of all piety and religion, and constant continuance in the feare of God : for this it was that made *Moses* endure affliction without discouragement, his hope as an anchor was cast within the vaile of heaven, Heb. 11. 27. and this (indeed) made the Martyrs passe through the fire with singing and rejoycing. It was the devils drift in *Jobs* affliction to make him utter words of blasphemie and distrust, as appeares by *Jobs* constant resolution to the contrary, Job 13. 15. *If the Lord should kill me, yet would I trust in him.* Yea further, the enemies of saluation labour most of all against hope, to bring men to despaire, because that is a maine and principall heresie, it denieth God to be a Father, Jesus Christ a Saviour, the Holy Ghost a Comforter : yea, it denies the love, the truth, and the power of God, that God hath any love to mankinde, truth in his Word, or power to performe his promise: and therefore no marvell though the enemies of true beleevvers bend their subtilty and strength against their hope of life eternall. And these things make it most plaine, that so long as the devill is the devill, a roaring Lion, and thirsting after nothing more than the blood of the Saints, our hope of life & saluation shall never want enemies to assault it, but the devill will one way or other try both his cunning by lies and errours, and his strength by violence, to move us away from our hope of life eternall : and therefore it behoveth as many as have this hope, ever to stand upon their guard, to be ready armed and provided against assaults, and before the time of triall and assault come, ever to pray with *David*, Psal. 119. 116, 117. *Stablish me that in time of triall I bee not disappointed of my hope, stay upon me and I shall be safe.* For if we upon our hope of eternall life, in time of health, and out of triall, begin to be quiet with our selves, if we begin to be secure and presumptuous, let us be sure we are not farre from danger. We must consider that there is in them that truly beleve, no such certainty of hope, as hath in it no wavering or doubting at all, no, no, grace is ever for the time of this life, mingled with the contrary corruption : we must remember that we in regard of the infirmity of our flesh, are wavering and staggering, and have in us cause of humbling : that so we may have recourse to the Lord by prayer to be stablished in our hope, and then come hell, devill, flesh, or any enemy of our saluation, if the Lord stay us we shall stand fast, and be sure not to miscarry. Yea, but will some say, the Lord sometimes for the triall of the faithfull, in the very act of the assault when Satan is laying siege to the conscience of true beleevvers, labouring by the sight of sinne to drive to despaire, the Lord seemes to withdraw his hand, and to hide his face, his love and his mercy are so overshadowed with the cloud of present affliction, that they cannot be seene.

What is to be done in such a case, and how then shall a man be able to hold out, and not be driven besides his hope of eternall life?

To this I answer, in such a case, and in such a time, we must first consider the Lords manner of working, that he then worketh not openly and sensibly, but secretly, that then he hath his secret working for the supporting of his children, that they fall not quite away : and we must then (contrary to our owne sense and feeling) cleave fast to his Word and promise, even to the bare word, when all other things for triall, seeme contrary unto us. Thus did *Abraham*, as the Apostle saith, Rom. 4. 18. *against hope*, when he had no reason to hope, then hee hoped, knowing the secret power and working of the Lord.

Again, in such a case we are to thinke upon the former and forepassed mercie of God towards us, as *David* saith, when his spirit was in perplexity within him, and his heart amazed : he remembered the time past, and meditated in the works of the Lord, Psal. 143. 4, 5. But here will Satan lay before the conscience a stumbling block, and tell a man in time of the conflict, that in this respect his sinne is the greater and more grievous, in that it hath bene committed against so great mercy received : the greatnesse of mercy formerly received,

Despaire is a principall heresie.

Vse.

They that have hope of eternall life, must ever be provided to withstand assaults.

Quest.

Answer.

We must look upon the former mercie of God towards us, as David saith, when his spirit was in perplexity within him, and his heart amazed : he remembered the time past, and meditated in the works of the Lord, Psal. 143. 4, 5.

doth aggravate his sinne: therefore to helpe our selves againe, and to repell and beat backe also this assault, wee are further to call to minde, and remember the examples of many servants of God, as *David*, *Peter*, and such like: to whom the Lord hath remitted great finnes committed, after great mercy received. And that wee may set before us such examples for our comfort and the confirmation of our hope, it is plainly taught by the Apostle, *Rom. 15:4. Whatsoever things are written afore time, are written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.* And that the holiness of such men shoule not hinder us from looking on them for our comfort: *Saint Iames* makes it plaine in that particular of prayer, *Iam. 5:17. where hee saith, The prayer of a righteous man availeth much, if it be fervent: for example, the prayer of Elias.*

Object.

Answer.

Now some might say, Oh but *Elias* was a man endued with a rare measure of grace, and we are farre short of that holiness that was in him. This the Apostle prevents, and saith that he was subject to the like passions that we are: as if he had said, What doe you stand to reason against your selves, hee was subject to the like passions that wee are, giving us to understand that the holiness of the man, set before us for example in Scripture, ought not to discourage us from doing the like duty, or expecting the like comfort that he received. Thus we see how as many as have hope of eternall life, are to arme themselves to encounter the assaults of Satan laid against their hope, before the assaults come, they are to have recourse to the Lord by prayer, that in the power of his might they may bee able to stand in time of the assault: they are to thinke on the Lords secret manner of working, and on his forepassed mercy towards them, and to call to minde the example of Gods children, to whom he hath remitted great finnes after great mercie received, and that their holiness ought not to discourage us from looking for the like comfort that they received.

One thing further we may note from these words: the Apostle saith not, he not moved away from hope at large and indefinitely, but from the hope of the Gospell.

Dott. 6.
The doctrine
of the Gospell
onely works
hope of eter-
nall life.

Whence it followeth, that the doctrine of the Gospell, the doctrine of the remission of sins, and life everlasting by Christ, is that onely which works in us hope and expectation of life eternall: it is not the Law that can bring forth this effect, the Law properly worketh in us no saving grace of faith, hope, or the like. Hence it is, that the Law is called a killing letter, *2 Cor. 3* and the Gospell onely the word of life, and the word of salvation, *Act. 13:26*. And many other places might be brought to prove that the Gospell onely worketh in us faith in Jesus Christ, and certaine hope of life eternall.

Use 1.
Confutation
of the Papists.

And first, this makes knowne, that the hope of Papists is no true hope, for their hope (as their own words testify) is grounded upon performance of those things Gods requires of them, so farre forth as they are able to doe them: this hope is rather of the Law than of the Gospell, he that will ground his hope upon performance of those things God requireth of him, so farre as he is able to doe them, hath no reason in the world to hope for any good at Gods hand: for who is so blinded with selfe-conceit, and bewitched with selfe-love, that he is not how farre short he cometh of doing that he might doe, both in the state of nature and grace? To leave them therefore, and to apply the point to our selves, is it so that it is the proper worke of the Gospell to bring men to certaine hope of life and salvation?

Use 2.
We must look
that the Go-
spell have the
proper effect of
it amongst us.

Let us then further meditate on this point to this purpose: We have had (by the mercy of God) the Gospell sounding amongst us many yeares, let us therefore looke that the Gospell have the proper effect and worke of it amongst us in this particular, that it beget in every one of us a lively hope of eternall life, even a true hope, not proceeding from Saranick illusion or presumption; such

such as is the hope of the greatest part in the world ; but from good grounds, from true faith in Christ, and from the testimony of his Spirit, and from the fruits of it : looke that wee have such an hope, for that is the kindly and naturall worke of the Gospell. And that I may not barely propound this without enforcement by some reasons to move us unto it, consider with mee these two.

First, if the Gospell have not wrought in us some measure of certaine hope of life eternall, wee are yet (for any thing wee know) in no better state than the very damned devils in hell : for they know the story of the Gospell, yea, they beleeve it to be true ; yet so, as they tremble, yea, have no comfort by it to themselves.

Againe, if wee bee such as have no hope, if wee bee as it were desperate persons under the Gospell, wee shall in time of triall bee most desperate: for as our Saviour saith, *If light become darknesse, how great is that darknesse?* If that which is sweet in it selfe become bitter to us, how great then is that birternesse? Come to experience in this, aske a desperate conscience what comfort it finds in the doctrine of the Gospell, the doctrine of remission of finnes, and wee shall finde it will answer, it is so farre from finding comfort in that, as nothing in the world doth more gall and grinde it: and there is reason for it, because it hath no part in that comfort. It is the case of the damned in hell, their torments in hell are increased upon them, by the consideration of the losse of the comfort in heaven, they are not onely tormented with paines of sense, but of losse: so such as are in a desperate state, under a sense and feeling of Gods anger: their desperation and their discomfort is greater in consideration of the sweet comfort of the Gospell, because they are perswaded it belongs not unto them.

If then wee would not finde our selves for any thing wee know to the contrary, in the same state with the devill in hell, if we would not onely be hopelesse, but even finde our selves plunged (especially when the time of triall shall be) into the depth of fearfull desperation, let us be carefull now while the Gospell is sounding in our eares in this day of salvation, as the Apostle speaks, 2 Cor. 6. 2. that the Gospell may produce the proper fruit and effect of it in our hearts, that wee may have such an hope wrought in us by the Gospell, as shall never deceive nor make us ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.

Come we to the next words [*whereof yee have heard*] These words containe a specification of what Gospell the Apostle meant in the words before, namely, that which we have heard preached by *Epaphras*, wherein (as wee heard in the resolution of this verse) is implied the meanes how the Colossians came to have hope of life and salvation, namely, by hearing the Gospell preached unto them. The words in the originall are thus; The Gospell which you have heard: there is no difficulty in the words for the sense, they are to be taken in the proper signification as they are laid downe. The Gospell which you have heard, and that preached unto you, for so much the words following give us to understand. I passe over that which I noted before upon the very same words, ver. 5. The thing wee are hence to observe for the ground of our instruction is this.

That the Apostle is not content to say, continue grounded and stablished in the faith, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospell in generall, but he addes further more specially, the Gospell which you have heard. The generall conclusion that comes from hence is this, that one speciall cause of falling backe from faith, of declining in hope, or any other grace, is forgetfulnesse of those particular things which we have heard preached unto us, when wee decline or decay in religion, in the feare of God, or in any other grace, it is by forgetting

Motives 2.

1

2

Note.

574

D. 7.

One speciall
cause of falling
backe and de-
clining in any
grace, is forget-
fulness of par-
ticular do-
ctrine heard
preached.

forgetting and letting slip out of our minds the particular doctrine which wee have heard, and in former times received, Revel. 3. 2. Our Saviour exhorting the Angell of the Church of Sardi, being fallen into a drowie security, to ~~make~~ and strengthen the things which remaine, that are ready to die: he sets down this as the meanes and remedy, ver. 3. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent: thereby making knowne unto them, that forgetfulnesse of things heard, was the cause of their decay in religion, and the remembrance of them would be a meanes of repentance and recovery. The Holy Ghost (Hebr. 12.) perswading to patience in time of affliction, faith, ver. 5. Have ye forgotten the consolation which speaketh unto you as unto children? For so the words are to be conceived, as uttered with an interrogation, Have ye forgotten? when hee brings to their remembrance a place out of the old Testa. Prov. 4. 11. My sonne, refuse not the chastening of the Lord, neither bee grieved with his correction. Whence it is cleare that we are to conceive his speech, as if he had thus said; You ought not to forget the comfortable word of exhortation you have heretofore heard, and that hath bin taught, tending to stablish your hearts, and to make you stedfast: by remembering it you may be strengthened in patience, and by forgetting it you shall find the contrary effect, you shall faint in your mindes, and not be able to hold out in the day of triall. If therefore we would not decline in faith, in hope, and goe backward in grace and good things, our duty is that which the holy Ghost hath taught us, Heb. 2. 1. Wee are diligently to give heed to the things which we have heard, that wee be not retchlesse and loose hearers, that the thing heard, runne not through us. Many things taught are heard of some with delight, their minds seeme to be ravished for the time with joy at the hearing of them, (as Christ saith of the Jewes, Joh. 5. ver. 35. Iohn was a burning and a shining candle, and ye would for a season have rejoyced in his light) yet suddenly they slip away from them, as if they had never heard them. This comes partly from the corruption of nature, and partly from the Devill: heavenly things are so contrary to our corrupt affections, that for them to abide in us, is even like fire and water to abide together: and the Devill doth what hee can to quench the light of them in our hearts, and utterly to race out the remembrance of them, and not to leave any print of them. Let us then (knowing this corruption of our nature, and the working of Satan) labour with care and diligence to keep things heard and learned, let the remembrance of them be daily renewed in us by continuall meditation and thinking upon them. And to helpe us forward in this duty, consider: first, that by meditating and calling to minde things heard, wee come to the greatest measure of knowledge, yea, to apply the doctrine taught more particularly to our selves, than our teachers either doe, or can doe, because (if it please God to open our eyes) we are best acquainted with our owne estate, and can best apply the doctrine heard to our owne instruction and comfort: as a mans owne hand can better apply the plaister to his secret sore, if hee will endure it, and take paines to doe it, than the hand of the most skilfull Chirurgion. This no doubt was Davids meaning, when he said, hee was wiser than his teachers, Psal. 119. 99. and he makes this indeed the reason, for thy testimonies are my meditation.

Motive 1.

Againe, consider that the doctrine of the Word heard truly preached, shall one day, even at the day of judgement, bee that by which wee must bee judged, by which all works must bee tried, as the Apostle saith, Rom. 2. 16. At that day God shall judge the secrets of man by Iesus Christ, according to my Gospell. If then wee doe not call to minde and remember things learned, the doctrine heard shall (at the day of judgement) bee a bill of indictment against us, especially if wee heard it with delight, and afterward have let it slip from us, it shall then leave us without all excuse, it shall be

Vse.
We are to give diligent heed to things heard and not let them slip out of our minds.

Note.

be a bill of inditement, and a fearfull sentence of condemnation against us, and in consideration of these things, let us bee stirred up to follow the counsell of the Wiseman, Pro. 4. 13. both to take fast hold of instruction, and not to let it slip from us: let us keepe it fast and sure which we have laid hold upon it.

Now to that which followeth. *And which hath bene preached to every creature which is under heaven, &c.* In these words is the first argument of prevention, whereby the Apostle doth prevent an objection of the Colossians, they might say the Gospell wee heard was onely preached unto us by *Epaphras* our Minister, and we may doubt whether it be the true Gospell of Christ or no, this the Apostle prevents.

First, by this argument, that it was the same Gospell which was preached to all nations of the world, for so the words are to be conceived, as appeares plainly, by conference of those two places together, Mark. 16. 15. Matth. 28. 19. by every creature under heaven, is meant all nations of the world.

If any say, we read of certaine nations newly converted in latter times.

I answer as before, verf. 6. that is to bee understood of the profession of the Gospell by publike authority, the Gospell founded forth in the dayes of the Apostles to all nations, but it was not received by publike authority, till the time of *Constantine* and *Theodosius*. The point I will observe from these words, (having spoken of the same in substance) verf. 6. it shall be from the purpose of the Apostle in this place, (namely) the preventing of that objection, that the Gospell they heard was onely preached by *Epaphras*, whereas the Apostle doth prevent this objection on this manner. The Gospell you have heard, is the Gospell preached to all the world: hence I gather thus much:

That (indeed) that is the true doctrine of the Gospell, which is consonant and agreeable to the doctrine of the Apostles preached throughout the whole world. Universality of doctrine, and generall over-spreading of it, is not sufficient to prove it to be true, (for so any heresie may be forced upon men) unlesse it consent with the doctrine preached to all the world, by the Apostles. Hence it is that *Paul* saith, and he doubles his speech, Gal. 1. 8, 9. That man or that Angell from heaven must be accursed, and held in extreame detestation, that shall teach any doctrine, not onely contrary, but besides that we have bene taught, and have received from *Paul*, and from the other Apostles.

How shall I know that the doctrine now taught, is agreeable to that which the Apostles preached long since?

Looke into the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists, for there is not a sentence that ever the Apostles taught, but for the substance of it, it is written in the booke of the new Testament; it is but a shifting distinction of the Papists, that forsooth the first truth or Gospell is twofold, either written and recorded in the booke of the new Testament, or unwritten, delivered onely by word of mouth, for that which the Apostles taught and preached, the same (saith *Irenaeus*) by the will of God they afterward delivered in writings, to be a foundation and pillar of our faith. Yea, but will some say againe, the writings of the Apostles are hard to be understood.

How shall we then know what doctrine is agreeable unto them, seeing the meaning of the Holy Ghost in the writings themselves, is hard to be found out.

To this I answer: First, all things in the writings of the Apostles are not hard, but only some things, so saith Pet. 2 Epist. 3. 16. Things most needfull to be knowne & beleaved to salvation, may come to be knowne by diligent reading and hearing, attentive marking, earnest prayer, and judging of them in humility.

Again, wee must know there be two things specially aymed at in the writings of the Apostles. 1. The advancement of the name and glory of Christ Jesus. And 2. the spirituall worship and service of God. Any man by diligent reading may observe these two things principally driven at in all the writings of

Interpretation.

Object.

Answer.

Doct. 8.

That is the true doctrine of the Gospell that agreeeth with the doctrine of the Apostles preached to all the world.

Object.

Answer.

Object.

Answer.

of the Apostles, and therefore that doctrine is agreeable unto them, that setteth forth Christ unto us with all due regard of his glory, in the worke of redemption and salvation, with due respect of the honour of his name, as the onely King, Priest, and Prophet of his Church, and doth urge upon us spirituall worship and service of God standing in mortification of the flesh, newnesse of life, and spirituall obedience.

Thus wee may know what doctrine is agreeable to the doctrine of the Apostles.

Use.

Wee must not bee discontented with doctrine plainly delivered, because it is common.

Note.

Scorning and blasphemous speeches against the Ministers of the Gospell.

For the use of this point, I might shew the errour of many points of doctrine among the Papists, but I passe by that, let us thinke upon it to this purpose: is it so, that true doctrine is that which is consonant and agreeable to the doctrine of the Apostles preached many hundred yeares agoe? Then let us take heed of discontentment with doctrine plainly delivered unto us, because it is common, and because we have heard it many times before: for why? the same doctrine must still be taught that was taught in the time of the Apostles, and that doctrine is onely good: it is the vanity of mans nature, not to bee content with good things, because they are common and ordinary: but it is the worst kinde of discontent to bee displeased with things pertaining to salvation. It is worse then if a man should not like wholsome meat set before him to day, onely for this, because he fed on the same dish yesterday: to be discontent with the Word, because wee have heard the same thing before, is the itching of the eare foretold by the Apostle? 1 Tim. 4. 3. *The time will come when they will not suffer to hear some doctrine, but having their eares itching.* And the Apostle there saith, this itching is found in them that follow their owne lusts. And let men take heed they follow them not to their owne destruction, for it is just with the Lord to harden our hearts, and to close the eyes of such who only heare the Word for fashion, and thinke themselves already abundantly skilfull. Hee hath said by the Prophet Isaiah 66. 2. *To him will I looke, and to him alone, that is poore and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my words,* that is humble in his owne eyes, receiving the Word with reverence, hungering after it as the food of his soule, and saying in his heart as Samuel did, 1 Sam. 3. 10. *Speake on Lord, for thy servant heareth.* (Whereof I Paul am a Minister.) This is the second argument preventing the former objections the Colossians might have made: the Gospell they had heard, was the same Paul himselfe an Apostle preached, that which is to be noted is briefly this, that Paul calls himselfe a Minister of the Gospell. Wicked therefore and blasphemous are those scoffing speeches of *Harding* against Jewell, and the like many times belched out of the mouths of Papists and Atheists, against the Ministers of the Gospell, your Minister-like talke, your Minister-ship, &c. These blasphemies against the sacred name of Minister, which the Word so often useth, and Saint Paul is not ashamed to take to himselfe, are against the Word of truth it selfe.

Verf. 24. *Now rejoyce I in my sufferings for you, and fulfill the rest of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his bodies sake, which is the Church.*

IN this Verse wee have the second argument of the Apostle, perswading the Colossians to continuance in the faith: the argument is from the end of the Apostles owne sufferings, being prisoner at Rome, that he suffered affliction for the confirmation of the Colossians in faith, and for the whole body of Christ, which is the Church: this argument is applied by the manner of his sufferings, and the subject of them. The manner, that it was with rejoycing, and the causes of that were two first, because his portion was allotted unto him, implied in that word (*fulfill*): secondly, because his afflictions pertained to Christ, and were the rest of his afflictions (and fulfill the rest of the afflictions of Christ)

Christ) then he makes knowne the subiect of his suffering, (namely) his flesh: these be the things generally comprised in this verse. Now to the words as they are laid downe by the Apostle, and first of these words (*Now reioyce I in my sufferings for you*) the word (*now*) is not here a note of time but of transition, as Gen. 3. 1. *now the serpent*, &c. (*in my sufferings*) that is in respect, or for my sufferings: a man may happily reioyce in time of suffering for some other thing, but the Apostles meaning is, for, or in respect of his sufferings (for you) (that is) for the confirmation of you in the doctrine of the Gospell; and the encouragement of you constantly to suffer for the Gospell if you be called unto it.

Interpretation.

The first thing hence to bee observed, is the argument of the Apostle: hee makes his imprisonment and his sufferings for the Gospell, an argument of confirmation to the Colossians, to perswade them to continue in the faith.

Hence ariseth this generall conclusion, that the sufferings of the Saints of God, especially of publike persons, are not onely good and profitable to themselves, either for their owne triall, for the correction of things amisse in them, or as markes of their owne adoption: but unto others also, who either behold or heare of them. The sufferings of the Saints (of what kind soever) are profitable, not onely to themselves, but to others also. The Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 1. 6. *Whether we be afflicted it is for your consolation and salvation, which is wrought in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer.* Where wee see hee lets downe a double use and profit of his afflictions, reaching beyond himselfe to the Corinthians (namely) their consolation and salvation, their comfort and their encouragement in the like sufferings. The Apostles afflictions were profitable to the Corinthians for their salvation, onely as a meane and helping cause, and not as meritorious, but onely to helpe them forward in the way of salvation: for further prooffe of this, consider the severall sufferings of the Saints they are either corrections of their sinne or trials of their faith, of their obedience, &c. or testimonies of their profession of the Gospell: as when they suffer as Martyrs, sealing their profession of the truth with the suffering of any torment, yea, to the shedding of the blood. In all these wee shall finde that their sufferings are not onely profitable to themselves, but to others also, as first their sufferings in way of correction, are not onely meane of good to themselves, but documents and warnings to others to make them wary and carefull to avoyde the like sinne. Thus were the sufferings of David, after his sinne was pardoned, 2 Sam. 12. 14. because hee was a publike person, and by his sinne had opened the mouthes of Gods enemies, he suffered the losse of his childe, that by his suffering others might learne to take heed of the like sinne.

Doct. 1.

The sufferings of Gods Saints are profitable not onely to themselves but to others also.

Againe, their sufferings in way of tryall are in many places of the Scripture set before us, for the working of patience in us, Iam. 5. 10. 11. *Take my brethren the Prophets for an ensample of suffering adversity and of long patience, which have spoken in the name of the Lord: behold ye have heard of the patience of Iob, and have knowne what end the Lord made.*

Last of all, their sufferings in way of testimony, are notable meane of confirmation and encouragement of others to the like sufferings. The stories of the primitive times of the Church are full of examples. It is very memorable that is writen in the Ecclesiasticall story of the City of Edessa, a City of Mesopotamia, *Rassens* lib. 2. cap. 5. it is there said when the Christians by the decree of the Emperour, were banished all Churches, they met in fieldes, which being espied of the Emperour, in great rage hee stricke his chiefe Captaine with his fist, demanding why he did not thence also drive them as hee had commanded: upon this, his Captaine purposed the very next day to destroy them, yet (his affections arising against so cruell a fact) hee secretly lets fly abroad, that this next day hee would destroy all that were found

at those meetings, hoping thereby to warne them to abstaine from comming thither; but see the powerfull working of the bloody persecution of those dayes, for the confirmation of men in suffering for the truth: the next day Christians, though before admonished of the danger, yet flocke thither in greater number than before; yea, they runne headlong, and make hast, as men afraid to come too late to suffer death; amongst the rest, the Captaine observed a woman to runne with such haste out of her house, as that shee neither stayed to shut her doore, nor to put on her cloathes, as womanlike modesty required, and in her armes shee carryed a little infant, when the Captaine saw it, hee commanded the woman to come before him, and being come, hee asked her whether she made all that haste; into the fields (said shee) where the Christians meet. And hast thou not heard (said hee) that the chiefe Captaine is going thither to put to the sword all that there he findeth; yes (said shee) I have heard it, and therefore I make haste that I may be there when he comes: but what wilt thou doe with that little Infant (said hee)? Take it with mee also, (said shee) that if the Lord will, it may also be vouchsafed martyrdom. By this and many other examples that might bee brought, it is most plaine that the sufferings of Saints (in way of testimony) are notable meanes to encourage others to the like sufferings.

Use.
Wee are to
profit by our
consideration
of the suffering
of Gods
Saints.

And therefore for the use of this point, let us not passe over the consideration of the sufferings of the Saints without profit; let the saying bee found true in us in respect of other mens sufferings, *μαρτυρια μαρτυρια*, let the afflictions of others be our instructions, let their corrections warne us to be more warie, and to be more carefull to avoid the like sinnes: let their trials build us up in patience, and holy obedience; and for the sufferings of the Saints in former times as Martyrs, we are not to let the remembrance of them vanish and fall out of our mindes without profit to our selves: Indeed (will some say) there is use to be made of the sufferings of Martyrs: if we should fall into the like times they did, then by them wee might be encouraged to the like constancy, and they might worke in us like resolution.

Objection.
Answer.

But now what use can we now make of them in the dayes of peace?

Very great good use; they serve not onely to seale, ratifie and confirme unto us the truth of that religion we professe, (which is a notable use) but wee are further to thinke upon them to this speciall purpose; they suffered losse, not onely of lands and goods, but of life also for the maintenance of the truth of the Gospell.

Surely then the hearing of these their sufferings, ought to make us forgoe the sensuall pleasures and profits of this world, which cannot stand with the keeping of faith, and a good conscience. Did the holy martyrs in former times suffer the losse of their lives by fire, fagot, and most exquisite torments, to maintaine the truth of the Gospell, and wilt not thou by their sufferings be moved to suffer the want of so much as a cup of beere or wine not needfull, or the want of some carnall pleasure, for the keeping of faith and a good conscience? It seemes it is not the same religion and Gospell now professed by thee, and heretofore maintained by them? Yes surely, but thou art not the like affected professor of the same Gospell, it hath not yet the same powerfull working in thy heart: and know it for a truth, that if the sufferings of the Martyrs (they suffering losse of their dearest blood) have not thus farre profited thee, to move thee to suffer the losse, and the cutting off of thy dearest sin; thou hast not yet made a right use of them: and certainly as their sufferings were testimonies of the truth and power of the Gospell; so they shall one day be so many witnesses against thee: they shall bee as *Abrahams* prayer was for Sodome, sweet smelling sacrifices to God in themselves, but serving for thy deeper condemnation; as *Abrahams* prayer was accepted of the Lord, and yet Sodome was destroyed.

Now

Now reioyce I, &c. Not to say any thing of that, might hence bee noted; that wee are to suffer affliction with ioy, I stood on that verl. 14. wee are further to marke that *Paul* reioyced that his sufferings were for the good of the Colossians. Hee was glad, and it did him good at his heart, that his sufferings were for their good. Hence I gather, that we are (after his example) to bee glad, and it must bee the ioy of our hearts, if in any thing we may doe good to the Church, and to our brethren: yea, if wee may doe them good by suffering and by shedding of our blood, wee are chiefly to lay downe our lives for the glory of God, and for the furtherance of the salvation of our brethren, Ioh. 4. 34. Wee have the example of Christ laid before us, who tooke such delight in doing the will of his Father, as it was even meate and drinke to him to doe it; the worke of redemption, the conversion and bringing of Gods chosen to the knowledge of their salvation, he saith it was his repast, it was even as meate and drinke to him. We finde a worthy speech of the Apostle. *Act. 20. 24.* hee saith, though the holy Ghost did witnesse and let him understand that bands and afflictions did abide him, yet (saith he) I passe not at all, neither is my life deare unto my selfe, so that I may fulfill my course with ioy for the good of the Church of God: the reasons and grounds of this are two.

First, because we are members of one mysticall body, and one member of the body is ready to helpe and doe good to another; yea sometimes to suffer one for another, as the armes suffers letting of blood for the good of the head or the liver, &c.

Againe, because the good wee doe to our brethren the members of Christ, it reacheth to Christ himselfe, so saith our Saviour, *Math. 25. 40.* Therefore looke with what cheerefulness we would doe good to Christ (if it were possible to doe it to his owne person) with such alacrity wee are to doe it to our brethren; yea to suffer, and shed our blood, if it may be for their good. This being so, that we are to reioyce, and to make it the ioy of our hearts, if we may doe good to our brethren, by suffering and shedding of our blood, then surely it followeth necessarily, we are to reioyce to doe them good, by the discharge of our duty in our publike place and office, wherein wee come not so farre as to shed one drop of our blood. Let this teach us to shake of sloth and sluggishness in doing publike duties for the good of our brethren. Any man may see it, that many that are in place and office to doe good to others, goe heavily and sleepily about publike businesse; every man almost is of such a leaden hart, and heavie spirit, in doing the duties of love to his brethren, as the things done, when they are done, are neither pleasing to God, nor truly comfortable to men. Therefore a little to awake and stirre up such men as are heavy hearted, and drowsie in doing service by love to their brethren, according to their place, calling, and ability, consider we these things.

First in doing good duties with cheerefulness, we are like to the Lord himselfe, who is said to reioyce in doing good to his Church, *Deut. 30. 9.* what better example than this to follow?

Secondly, thereby we testifie our communion with the Church that wee are members of it, that we have a fellow-feeling both of the good, and of the afflictions of our brethren.

And consider yet further, if our worke of love be sluggish, it is more than a probable argument we are yet a sleepe in a carnall security, and doe but dreame of Christ, and of the remission of our finnes, for faith worketh by love. *Galath. 5. 6.* And such as faith is, such will love bee; and such as love is, wee may gather faith to be. If then wee bee slothfull in performance of the duties of love to our brethren, it will scale up unto us a fearefull conclusion, that our faith is indeed but a fancy; and our hope surtable, such as in the end will confound and make us ashamed.

Doct. 2.

We are to bee glad, if in any thing we may doe good to Gods Church thought it be to the shedding of our blood.

Reason 2.

1

2

Use.

We are to reioyce in doing good to our brethren in discharge of our duty.

Motives.

1

2

3

Note.

The weaknesse
and wickednes
of a popish col-
lection from
this verse dis-
covered.

Reasons a-
gainst it.

2

It then we desire to be like the Lord himselfe: if we would rectifie our communion with the Saints of God, if we would not scale up to our hearts that we have no true faith in Iesus Christ, and no sound hope of life and salvation, let us bee moved to discharge publike duties that concerne us, and to doe service to our brethren with alacrity, with ioy and reioycing, let us shake off immoderate love of our selves, which causeth men to make Idols of themselves, to dreame of nothing but their owne good and profit, for that indeed makes a mans heart that it cannot be extended, it is the mother of covetousnesse, and many foule finnes, as appeares, 2 Tit. 3. 2.

Now before we come to the causes that moved the Apostle to reioyce in his sufferings: I will stand a while to remove a misconstruction of this text, and false collection that is made by the Papists, from these words of the Apostle, In that the Apostle saith, *Now reioyce I in my sufferings for you, and fulfill the rest of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his bodys sake the Church.* Hence they gather and conclude.

That the sufferings of the Saints are meritorious and satisfactory for themselves and others, and that the sufferings of the Saints doe satisfie the iustice of God for temporall punishment due, not onely for their owne finnes, but also for the finnes of others: which collection is full of contumely and blasphemy against the infinite merit and satisfaction of Christ his death and passion, I might shew the error of this conclusion by many places of Scripture, the Apostle saith, 1 Corinth. 1. 13. *Was Paul crucified for you,* as if he had said, It is blasphemous once to thinke that either Paul, or any other but Christ, was crucified for us, but that wee may easily see the weaknesse, and indeed the wickednesse of this collection: I will make it plaine and evident that it is repugnant and contrary to the words of this verse, and that this text which they bring as a strong argument, to prove humane satisfaction is altogether against themselves.

First therefore consider, that when the Papists describe unto us what be their satisfactory punishments, then forsooth they reckon up fastings, sackcloth, pilgrimages, teares, continuall sighes, &c. yea they confesse, that if in the outward actions of humiliation, inward griefe of hart bee wanting, they are nothing worth, now marke how these words make against them. The Apostle saith here in this text, he was farre from any inward griefe in his sufferings: yea hee saith the contrary, that he reioyced; therefore (doubtlesse) the sufferings of Paul were not among the sufferings which the Papists would have to be penall and satisfactory.

Againe, sufferings satisfactory, such as must answer the iustice of God for sinne, must needs bee punishments for sinne, because there can bee no compensation or expiation of sinne, but by punishment, either in the partie offending or in some other in his stead; the curse being annexed to the transgression of the Law, satisfaction must bee made by punishment: yea, the Papists themselves say, that satisfactory sufferings are penall, they bee their owne words on this place, that is, they are punishments for sinne: now to say that the sufferings of Paul, spoken of in this place, were punishments for the sinne, either of himselfe, or others; were most absurd: it hath not so much as likelihood or shew of truth, it is cleane against the text, which makes knowne the Apostle suffered for the name of Christ, and for the maintenance of the truth of the Gospell, this is the argument of the Apostle: and so much is implied in the word *fulfill*, *ἀντὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, vicissim impleo*, I fulfill in the name of another, that is, of Christ, and so much also is expressed, in that the Apostle calles his afflictions the afflictions of Christ: thereby giving to understand, that hee suffered in, and for the name of Christ, for that is one reason why the sufferings of the Saints are called the sufferings of Christ, as saith Peter, in his first Epistle, chap. 4. vers. 13.

Reioyce

Reioyce in as much as ye are partakers of Christs sufferings, &c. then in verſe 14. If ye be railed on for the name of Chriſt, bleſſed are ye, for the Spirit of glory and of God reſteth on you; which on their part is euill ſpoken of: but on your part is glorified: where he makes it plaine, that one reaſon why the ſufferings of the Saints are called the ſufferings of Chriſt, is, becauſe they are ſuffered for the name of Chriſt: ſhall we then ſay that the ſufferings of Paul here ſpoken of, were ſufferings for ſinne? It is moſt groſſe: *Aliud eſt pati pro peccatis, aliud pro Chriſto.* Thus we ſee this very text which the Papiſts would force to maintaine humane ſatisfactions, it beares ſtrongly againſt them.

Yea but ſaith the Papiſts, by your leave, the Apoſtle ſaith, hee fulfilled the reſt of the afflictions of Chriſt: whence it is cleare (ſay they) that the ſufferings of Chriſt and of his members, make one maſſe, or one body of ſufferings: the ſuffering of the Saints are the plentitude and fulneſſe of Chriſt his ſufferings, and ſo by vertue of that union that is betwixt Chriſt and his members, their ſufferings receive influence and vertue from him to bee meritorious and ſatisfactory.

Obiection.

See the cunning of theſe men to deceive the ſimple, and their owne ſoules: It is true indeed that by reaſon of that Vniion that is betwixt Chriſt and his members, their ſufferings are ſaid to bee the ſufferings of Chriſt, and Chriſt to ſuffer in his members, and by the merit of his Paſſion, their ſufferings are accepted and rewarded: but that they are to bee ioyned with Chriſt his ſufferings in way of merit and ſatisfaction for ſinne, that followes not from the union that is betwixt him and his members, for they are not one by perſonall union, Chriſt and the Believer are two diſtinct perſons: now perſonall union is the ground of merit in Chriſt himſelfe; for his manhood apart and by it ſelfe meriteth nothing, but as it is received into perſonall union with the Godhead, they muſt then prove (which they are never able to doe) that wee are received into unity of perſon with Chriſt, before their concluſion will follow that by vertue of our union with him, the ſuffering of the Saints doe merit and ſatisfie: Thus then wee ſee the error and weakeneſſe of that popiſh colleſtion from this verſe, that the ſufferings of the Saints are meritorious and ſatisfactory.

Anſw.

Note.

Come we to the cauſes that moved the Apoſtle to reioyce in his ſufferings in theſe words [*and fulfill the reſt, &c.*] the word tranſlated [*fulfill*] as we have heard: it ſignifies not only to fill up the meaſure, but to doe it in the name of another, and the Apoſtles meaning is, in the name of Chriſt (*the reſt of the afflictions of Chriſt*) For the understanding of theſe words, we muſt know that the ſufferings of Chriſt are of two ſorts, either ſuch as hee ſuffered in his owne perſon for the redemption of his Church in way of ſatisfaction for ſinne, and expiation of ſin, whereof the Apoſtle ſpake before in this Chapter: or ſuch as hee ſuffereth in his members, and in the whole Church to the end of the world. When his members ſuffer in way of conformity and ſimilitude with Chriſt their head, then Chriſt accounteth their ſufferings as his owne. Hence they are ſaid to have fellowſhip with him in his afflictions, and to be conformable unto his death, Phil. 3. 10. and of this ſecond ſort the words of the Apoſtle in this place are to bee underſtood. (*The reſt of the afflictions of Chriſt*) that is, thoſe afflictions that remaine to bee ſuffered in way of conformity with Chriſt, (*in my fleſh*) that is, which are appointed unto me to ſuffer in my body: Thus then we are to conceive the words of the Apoſtle, as if he had ſaid, And fulfill up that meaſure of affliction allotted unto me as a member of Chriſt, and remaining to be ſuffered by me in his name, by way of conformity unto Chriſt.

Interpretation.

The firſt thing wee have here to marke, is the word uſed by the Apoſtle, hee ſaith not, beare the reſt, but (*fulfill*) whence wee may take up this inſtruction.

That the afflictions of the godly, the members of Chriſt, are meaſured out unto

Doct. 3.

The afflictions
of the godly
are measured
out unto them
in the good
providence of
God.

Reason.

Use.
We must not
limit the Lord
when we are
under his hand
in any afflictions.

to them in the good providence of the Lord, when they are under affliction, they are filling up of an appointed measure, how much, or how little every one shall suffer, is appointed in the eternal counsel of God, and it was not appointed that every particular person should suffer all and every sort of affliction, but that every member in the body of Christ should suffer, some in one sort and measure, and some in another. Wee finde the truth of this in *Iosephs* affliction: Psalm. 105. 19. it is said, *they held his feet in the stocks, and he was laid in irons untill his appointed time came, and the counsell of the Lord had tried him*: hee was afflicted, but how much, or how long? even so much, and so long as the Lord had appointed, untill his appointed time came. This also is cleare in the bondage of the affliction of the Israelites in Egypt, their affliction was measured and foretold, Genes. 15. 13. and when the measure was full, and the time expired, the selfesame day they were freed from it, Exod. 12. 41. howsoever there may seeme to be some difference of time mentioned in those two places, yet if we reckon the 400 yeares from the birth of *Isaac*, and 430 yeares from *Abraham* his first comming into the land of Canaan, they are easily reconciled, and prove the point in hand. And to this the seventy yeares captivity, mentioned Jerem. 25. 12. that also proves as much. And thus I might goe on from one example to another, and all meeting in this point delivered, that the afflictions of the godly are measured out unto them in Gods good providence: and the reason of this is manifest, namely this, not only the event and coming to passe of things is appointed of the Lord, but also the circumstances of every event, things not onely come to passe which God hath appointed, but as he hath appointed concerning the manner and measure.

Now then, is it so that the afflictions of the godly are measured out unto them in the good providence of God? then we must learne, when we are exercised under the hand of God, not to limit the Lord, nor to appoint him, how much or how long he shall afflict us, not to be content onely for a day or two, or while wee thinke good, and then begin to shake off the yoke of the Lord, but even so long to endure the affliction with patience as hee hath appointed, ever remembring that our affliction is measured out unto us by the good and gracious hand of God, even by that hand that will be sure to keepe measure and moderation. (which is a notable comfort) so saith the Apostle, 1 Cor 10. 13. *God is faithfull, and will not suffer his children to be tempted above that they are able, but will even give the issue with the temptation*, that they may be able to beare it. Marke (I beseech you) the Apostle makes the Lords keeping of measure and moderation in afflicting of his children, no lesse sure than it is that God is faithfull: and can God bee unfaithfull? If hee can, then thinke hee will exceed the measure of our strength in afflicting us; if not, bee of good comfort, for so certaine it is that hee will keepe measure in our affliction, as hee is faithfull that can bee no other: a sweet foundation of comfort in the greatest affliction. Ioyne to this the example of the Israelites before spoken of, Exod. 12. 41. Marke it, the Lord did not breake with them one day, no not at one houre, or minute of the appointed time of their deliverance; and be thou sure of it, that even dayes and houres of comfort fit for his children, as they are knowne to the Lord, so are they alwaies observed of him most graciously and most precisely: why then should wee tie the Lord to our time, and to our will, or else wee faint, wee fall, wee speake or thinke amisse, that the Lord regards us not, hath forgotten us, and forsaken us, or the like? learne never to doe it, let us never thus wrong our good and gracious God, but let us (in time of our affliction) pray that the Lord would (out of his mercy) consider our strength, and according to his promise lay no more upon us than hee will make us able to beare, and that he would give the issue with the affliction in due time, to his glory and our good.

Now

Now here an objection made by some occasioned from this doctrine, is to be removed. Such as are delivered out of trouble by meanes condemned in the word, (as by Witches and Wizards) may say, and that truly, their measure of trouble was appointed of the Lord, that so much they should endure and no more: and these being the meanes of their deliverance, doubtlesse they were so appointed of the Lord, and therefore may lawfully be used?

To this I answer first, the parts of this objection hang not together, they confesse them to be meanes condemned in the word, and yet would have it, that they may lawfully be used, whereas things condemned in the word can never be lawfully used.

Againe this is to make the secret will of God the rule of our actions, which is not knowne but by the event, and therefore ought not to be the rule of them, but onely the will of God revealed in his word.

Lastly, whereas they say that such meanes were appointed of the Lord, it is very true, the event reveales it: the Lord did appoint to suffer such to bee the meanes, by his working permission out of his iust indgement, not in his mercy, but as a curse to them, that are so delivered, and (without their unfained repentance) for the further encrease of their condemnation. For as heretofore I have shewed, when as the meanes of getting health, wealth, &c. are evill, it is thereby revealed that the Lord doth fully purpose to curse men, even in those good things and that is a heavy curse.

The second thing we have to marke, is the next word here used [*residuum*] the originall word (*ὑπομείματα*) signifieth the residue, remainer, hinder part or remnant &c. that which hence followeth is this, that the afflictions of the members of Christ are but as small remnants and reliques of Christ his sufferings. What wee that are members of Christ doe suffer, be it to the shedding of our blood by the sharpest and most exquisite torments that can bee devised, yet it is but a remnant in comparison of Christ his suffering. This wee shall find confirmed by further evidence of Scripture, *Isai. 63. 3. I have troden the wine-presse alone, and of all people there was none with me; saith Christ of himselfe.* The Evangelists set out in many words, the bitterness of Christ his sufferings as that his soule was heavy to the death, his cries strong, *Oh Father if it be possible let this cup passe from me;* his prayer was so vehement, his agony so great, that blood for sweate burst out of his body. His complaint was, that he was forsaken, an Angell was sent to comfort him, and these doe make it very plaine, that he endured greater paines than ever did any, and that the afflictions of his members, though they be martyred, yet are not comparable to his sufferings, they are but as a dramme in respect of the infinite waight of paine laid upon him. It is easie to make this further cleere by the strength of reason. As

First, God powred out upon Christ the whole malediction and curse of the Law, due to the finnes of all his chosen, and bestowed upon him iustice without mercy: *Galath 3. 13. he was made a curse for us:* but in the afflictions of his members, the Lord doth moderate his anger, and in iustice remembers mercy: yea the curse is removed from them according to that in the place before cited, *Galath. 3. 13. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, when he was made a curse for us.*

Againe, the Lord doth ever in wisdom proportion our affliction according to the strength of the afflicted, and the end of their afflictions, hee knowing their strength, and wherefore he doth afflict them. Hence it is that he saith, *Isai. 57. 16. He will not contend for ever, neither will he be alwaies wroth.* Now wee must needs confesse that Christ his strength did farre surpass the strength of any of his members, yea, of all his members, being God and man: he was able to endure the whole wrath of God, and the end of his suffering was satisfaction for sinne, and of theirs onely correction, tryall, or testimony, in way of conformity

Object.

2

3

Note.

Doct. 4.

The afflictions of the members of Christ are but as remnants in respect of his sufferings.

Reasons.

Vse 1.
When we are
afflicted wee
must consider
what Christ
hath suffered
for us.

Note.

Vse 2.
A checke to
that secret
thought arising
in the heart of
Gods child af-
flicted, that ne-
ver was any in
the like case
that he is in.

Object.

conformity to him, and so farre inferiour to the end of his sufferings: therefore the afflictions of the members of Christ are not to be compared to the affliction of Christ their head.

And this being so, that the afflictions of the godly (be they never so grievous) are but as a remnant in comparison of Christ his sufferings, then whensoever thou art afflicted, learne to consider what Christ hath suffered for thee: when thou findest a little affliction, a little paine in the least part of thy body so bitter, consider then what bitterness was in the whole sufferings of Christ: hee drunke the full cup of the bitterness of Gods wrath, thou dost onely taste it, or rather not so much as taste of it, to teach thee to consider what Christ hath suffered for thy redemption. And that this consideration may bee more profitable, learne to extend it a little further after this manner: Happily thou art pained with the gout, the stone, the wind collicke, the tooth-ach, or some such grinding and griping paine, and to bee eased thou canst be content to wish thy selfe out of the world; let this leade thee to consider the infinite paine and torment of Christ his sufferings, and withall consider thine owne sinne, by which thou dost adde and put new passions upon Iesus Christ: for thy sinne doth in a second degree torment him againe. Wilt thou confesse that the paine of a tooth is so great, that in regard of it thou couldest wish withall thy heart to bee out of the world to be eased of that paine? and yet wilt thou not sticke by thy sinnes, to adde new torments to Iesus, whose torment once farre exceeded the greatest paine and torment thou canst possibly endure? This is most savage and brutish cruelty, yea, such as is beyond all the degrees of comparison, matchlesse cruelty. Wilt thou (as much as in thee is) adde torments to him that shed his blood for thee, and suffered the extremity of Gods wrath for thee? If men when they are pained, would bee led forward by that paine to behold the bitterness of Christ his painefull passion, and withall, that their sinne is a further degree of torment unto him: doubtlesse it would make them (if hell have not full possession of their hearts) carefull to avoid sinne, yea, it would take from them all colourable excuses, commonly fetcht from the Devils store-house, as that they are not alone, that they are provoked and drawne on by company and the like: the swearer and the drunkard will plead that they forget themselves, that they are carryed away with company: and wilt thou so forget thy selfe, and so runne on with company, posting and making haste to hell, and againe pierce the sides of Iesus Christ? wilt thou (as much as in thee is) heape new passions upon him? Oh remember the bitter passion of Iesus Christ, and learne to be reformed.

Again, are our affections (we being members of Iesus Christ) but as a remnant in comparison of his sufferings? then let this serve as a checke to that secret thought sometimes rising up in the heart of Gods childe afflicted, yea, sometimes breaking out into this speech, that never was any in the like case that he is in, never was any so grievously afflicted as he is; thus was it with *Iob*, 6. 2. 3. he complained his griefe and misery was heavier than the sand of the sea. Thus the Church in great distresse calls to them that passe by the way, to *behold and see if any sorrow be like unto her sorrow*, *Lament. 1. 12*. If such a thought enter into thine heart in time of bitter affliction, learne to checke it by this, looke upon the bitter passion of Christ, and remember that the wave or billow of Gods wrath did light upon his head, and all that thou dost suffer is but a flash of water breaking off from that wave or billow: but here the devill hath found out a shift, when a man comes to some that are afflicted, and sets before them the bitterness of Christ his passion, and tels them they ought to looke upon that, and to remember that their affliction is nothing in comparison of his sufferings.

To what end (say they) doe you set before us the bitterness of Christ his sufferings? are we or any living, who are but meere men, able to beare that hee

was

was able to endure, who was God and man? Thus the Devill doth shift his foot, and is ready to suggest, to trouble the minds of such as are weak in time of affliction, and to make them thinke or speake amisse.

I answer unto it, it is true, thou art not able to beare what Christ endured: but thou must remember what before was delivered, that the Lord doth therefore proportion out thine affliction accordingly, and withall, that which makes sufferings hurtfull, I meane the curse, is removed from thee if thou be in Christ. But if thou wilt yet further insist upon the measure of thy paine, that never any member of Christ suffered the like; reason will evince the contrary, and thine owne conscience must of force acknowledge it to be otherwise: for if God lay no more upon any of his children than they by him are enabled to beare, and thy strength when it is the greatest, without question, is far inferiour to that of *Iob*, of *Abraham*, of *David*, &c. men eminent and endued with a great measure of strength, then certainly, their paine and affliction was greater than thine, and thou art not tried and afflicted like one of them.

It followeth [*the afflictions of Christ*] In that the Apostle calls his afflictions the afflictions of Christ, I might stand to shew that the afflictions of the members of Christ reach to Christ himselfe, which may strike amazement and terror into all that wrong them, and may comfort them that are wronged, with assurance that the Lord Iesus will not suffer himselfe long to bee pinched in his members, he hath experience of their miseries, and hath learned to be compassionate towards them: but this I have handled at large verse 15. And let mee adde onely thus much unto it, that the Lord Iesus doth know and acknowledge his members in their greatest distresse: their affliction cannot divide betwix him and them, and make him hide his face from them: the Lord calls the Israelites his people, when they were plunged in their deepest distresse, *Exod. 3. 7.* and in many other places of that booke. The Lord is not like the proud people of the world, who know a man in a gay coate or high place, but in poverty and basenesse will not vouchsafe to looke upon him, though he bee most neere unto them in the blood and kindred: it is not so with the Lord, but in the poorest plight, when the backes of his children are bare for want of cloathing, their faces leane, quite altered with brinish teares, that have worne furrowes in them, their heads hang downe for griefe, and all their bones are disioynted with racking tortures of bloody tormentors, even then doth the Lord know, and as graciously acknowledge them for his owne, as he did in their prosperity and chiefest outward comfort. If we further follow this in our meditations, it will minister unto us matter of sweet comfort.

Come we to the last thing to be stood on, in this verse in these words [*in my flesh*] The Apostle doth here restraints his sufferings spoken of to his owne person, and withall doth point out the subject of his suffering, that hee being now in prison, his body was afflicted. That we may hence observe is this.

That the persecuting enemies of the Church and of the members of Christ can goe no further than the body, they cannot come to the soule to hurt that, the soule is free from the rage and violence of all Satans instruments, as our Saviour hath taught, *Matth. 10. 28.*

Obiect. But will some say, they can make men abiure and renounce Christianity, as the Turkes doe at this day?

The abiuration is but like raving in some extremity of sickenesse, it is forced, and may be (where the seed of grace remaines) still in the heart: as a childe of God in some extremity of sickenesse may shew exceeding strange, yea, frantick behaviour, and so dye, and yet goe to heaven, and wee are not by any outward thing in his life or death, to iudge of his estate before God: so a true Christian may be forced to abiure Christianity, and yet still remaine a true Christian, all the tyrants in the world are not able to hurt his soule.

Let

Answer.

Doct. 5.

The Lord Iesus doth know and acknowledge his members in their greatest distresse.

Vse.

The Lord therefore is not like the proud people of the world.

Doct. 6.

The persecutors of the Church can onely touch the bodies of Gods children.

Obiect.

Answer.

Note.

Vse.

We are not to
feare them
who can onely
kill the body.

Let this for the use of it teach us, that which our Saviour hath taught, Luke 12. 4. *not to feare them that are onely able to kill the body, but cannot kill the soule.* And for our further encouragement herein, consider but this one thing: Are we the children of God and members of Christ? then the Lord hath delivered us from the power of sinne and Satan, and the bondage of unruly lusts, which are enemies to our soules and saluation; and is not he then able, and also willing in his good time to free us from weakemen, who can onely touch our flesh? Yes doubtlesse, let us make no question of it, but remember it and be strengthened in the time of need.

Verf. 25. *Whereof I am a Minister according to the dispensation of God, which is given me unto you ward, to fulfill the word of God.*

THese words are a farther amplification of the Apostles second argument, and containe in them, first a reason of the Apostles suffering for the Church, because he was a Minister of the Church (*Whereof I am a Minister.*)

Then secondly, a limitation of his Ministrie, in respect of his Ministeriall charge, that hee was appointed a Minister not of the Jewes, but of the Colossians and the rest of the Gentiles in these words, *according to the dispensation of God, which is given me unto you ward*: wherein wee have three materials to be considered.

First, his ministry which he calls a dispensation of God.

Secondly, how that was conferred upon him that it was given him.

Thirdly, the speciall reference and relation of it, *unto you ward.*

Then follows the end of this dispensation thus given unto him in the last words (*to fulfill the word of God.*)

Come we to the words as they are laid downe by the Apostle, *Whereof I am a Minister*, that is, of which Church I am a Minister: I might here urge it against the Papists, that the Apostle explaines himselfe how hee suffered for the Church, not as a Mediatour betweene God and the Church, but as a Minister of the Church, not to satisfie for others, but to minister to their faith by confirmation and strengthening of it, by his example and patience. But of this wee spake before in the former verse.

Observe we, that the Apostle saith, he was a Minister of the Church, the body of Christ: hee saith not that hee was a Minister at large, the word Minister being a word of relation, but he sets it down with this correlative (the Church) this his ministry had speciall reference to the Church of Christ, and to the true members of Christ, and not to any other. Hence ariseth this point of instruction.

That the outward ministry of the Word and Gospell is ordained of the Lord properly for the good of the Church, and with speciall respect to the true members of Christ, either actually or in Gods election. All ministeriall actions, as preaching the Word, administering the Sacraments and the like, have speciall relation to the good of Gods chosen, and this point is plainly propounded and laid before us by the Apostle, Ephes. 4. 12. together with a reason of it in the verse before, that to this end Christ ascending gave gifts unto men, some to bee Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers for the gathering together of the Saints for the worke of the ministry, and for the edification of the body of Christ. The ground of this is, the order which the Lord hath made knowne, that he holds in bringing of his chosen to life and salvation, that whom hee hath predestinate, them hee doth in time effectually call, and the ministry of the Gospell is by him appointed an instrument and meanes of effectually calling: by the preaching of the Gospell men are called. Now effectually calling properly belongs to the chosen of God, and therefore the ministry and meanes of salvation hath proper reference to the good of Gods chosen.

But

Doct. 4.

The outward
ministry of
the word is or-
dained proper-
ly for the good
of Gods
Church.

But will some say, the word is to be preached to all, the commission was generall, *Go teach all nations*, Math. 18. 19. and preaching is not limited in respect of the flocke committed to any mans charge.

Answer. It is true, the Minister of the Word is to preach to all to whom he is sent, presuming in the iudgement of charity, that all his hearers bee the Elect of God, leaving secret iudgement to God, but yet the outward ministry and preaching of the word, serves properly for the calling, and conversion, and confirmation of Gods chosen : and the reprobate are made partakes of externall vocation onely accidentally, because as tares and chaffe are mingled with good come, so they are among Gods chosen ; it serves as an occasion (by reason of their corruption) of their hardening, and to leave them without all excuse, 2 Cor. 2. 16. It is to the chosen of God the favour of life to life everlasting, but to others the favour of death to their deeper condemnation.

Now the application of this point might be to teach the wicked, how much they are beholding to the chosen of God, for whose sakes they are partakers of the sonnd of the Gospell, which sometimes worketh restraint in them from the outrage in sinne, though no renovation, and so their iudgement shall bee the easier in that respect ; yea, the continuance of the world is for the sake of Gods chosen : when their number is full then shall the end be. But let us rather thinke upon this doctrine to this purpose, is it so that the ministry of the word by man is appointed properly for the good of the body of Christ ? This then may serve as a ground of examination and tryall to every one of us, whether we be true members of the Church of God or no : hereby we may know it. The ministry of the word is ordained for the good of Gods chosen.

If then thou receive good by it, it is a sure signe of election to life and salvation : it is the marke Christ himselfe hath set upon his sheepe, Ioh. 10. 27. They heare his voyce sounding in the ministry of the Gospell, and they follow it, they are bettered by it : but if thou either wilt not heare it, or hearing it, carest not to follow it : but a drunkard before, a drunkard still ; filthy before, and filthy still, a worldling before, and still devoted to the things of this earth, and minding earthly things, to what fold thou doest belong, thy selfe and others may easily iudge, surely to the folde of Goats, not of Sheepe.

To drive this a little deeper, that this may profit and move thee hereafter to a further profiting by the ministry of the Word : consider these two things.

First, if the Minister would gaine and gather thee to God, and thou refuse, thou must know that thy wilfull refusal to bee gained and gathered, is the immediate fore-runner of iudgement, of thine owne destruction, and there is reason for it, God hath so threatned, *Prou. 1. 27. Zach. 7.* From verse 11. to the end, and it is a resistance of the spirit of God, *Act. 7. 51.* and it is the ripenessse and full growth of sinne, to hate to be reformed. Marke what Christ himselfe saith, as he was a Minister of Circumcision, *Math. 23. 37.* he would have gathered them together, but they would not, therefore their habitation should bee left unto them desolate.

Again, he that will not now heare the Minister of the word, speaking in the name of the Lord, or heare him without regard to take good by him, as those the Prophet *Ezekiel* speakes of, *Chap. 33. 31.* Let him know that the day shall come when his eares shall heare, (will he, nill he) that which shall make his heart ake, Goe thou cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devill and his Angels. Let these things stirre thee up to thinke upon it, how thou dost profit by the ministry of the word, and assure thy selfe Gods purpose cannot bee frustrate. If thou belong to him, his Minister is sent for thy good, and thou shalt receive good by him, if not, thou shalt bee hardened in thy sinne, and heape up wrath against the day of wrath,

Come we to the Apostles limitation of his ministry, in regard of his ministeriall

Object.

Answer.

Note.

Vse.

Trial of our selves whether we be true members of the Church or no.

Interpret.

Dof. 2.
The minister
of the Gospell
lawfully cal-
led to that
office is Gods
Steward.

Uſe 1.
Ministers of
the Gospell
have onely (as
stewards) the
ministry of
reconciliation
to declare to
the penitent
remission of
finnes, and not
power to for-
give finnes.

Uſe 2.
When the Mi-
nister of God
pronounceth
remission of
finnes to the
penitent and
shuts up Gods
kingdome a-
gainst the im-
penitent, it is
as if God him-
selfe should
doe it.

riall charge in these words (according to the dispensation of God. Which is given me unto you-ward) the words here translated (Dispensation of God) are not to be taken as sometimes they are used, for the providence of God, as wee use to say, by the mercifull dispensation of God (that is) by his good providence, because the providence of God cannot be given, as the Apostle saith, that this dispensation was: but they are to be conceived as the originall words doe signifie, according to Gods stewardship, (to you-ward) that is, in respect of you Colossians and the rest of the Gentiles as we have it, Gal. 2.7.

The first thing we have here to marke is, that the Apostle calls his ministry a stewardship given of God.

Hence we see that the minister of the Gospell, lawfully called to that office, is Gods steward, he is set over the household of God (his Church) as a steward over some great family. Hence it is that Paul saith to Timothy, 1 Tim. 3. 14. *These things write I unto thee, that thou maist yet know how thou oughtest to behave thy selfe in the house of God.* And in his Epistle to Titus, 1. 7. in expresse words, *A Bishop or Minister is Gods steward:* yea, he would have all men so to esteeme of them, 1 Cor. 4. 1. *Let a man so thinke of us as of the Ministers of Christ, and disposers of the secrets of God.* Where the Apostle makes knowne what bee the things committed to the Ministers of the Gospell to dispense, and dispose of, namely the secrets of God (that is) the doctrine of the Gospell, which is a secret and a mystery hid from the eyes of the world, (so called by the Apostle in the next verse of this chapter) and the doctrine of the Gospell being the word of reconciliation, publishing remission of sinnes to all that truly beleve it, and repent of their sinnes. Hence it is that the Ministers of the word are said to have the ministry of reconciliation committed unto them, 2 Cor. 5. 18. and as stewards to have the keyes of the kingdome of heaven, Math. 26. 19. to open or to shut heaven according to the condition propounded in the Gospell (that is) to declare and pronounce remission of sinnes, to them that beleve and truly repent, and that Gods mercy is shut up from them that are unbelievers and unrepentant. Thus are the Ministers of the word, Gods Stewards to dispose of his secrets after his will, and good reason that his will onely should rule in his owne house.

And therefore for the use of this in the first place, the Ministers of the word must take notice of it, that they have onely as the stewards of God, the ministry of reconciliation, to declare to the penitent remission of their sinnes, and not power to forgive sinnes, as that man of sinne the Pope doth challenge to himselfe, who in his blasphemous pardons, takes upon him to forgive both *penam & culpam*, punishment and sinne, and the ministers of the word have onely the keyes of the ministry in respect of Christ, whose stewards they are to open and shut according to the will of their master revealed, and not at their owne will and pleasure.

A second use of the doctrine now delivered may bee this, is the minister of God, Gods steward to dispose of his secrets according to his will? Surely then when the Minister doth so, when hee doth pronounce remission of sinnes to the penitent, and shut up the kingdome of heaven and Gods mercy from the impenitent, let us learne to account it, as if God himselfe should doe it: for hence it is, that the Ministers of the Word are said to remit or retaine sinnes, Ioh. 20. 23. because they declaring (by the Word) remission of sins to the penitent, and retaining of sinnes to the impenitent, it is as certaine, as if God himselfe should pronounce it from heaven. It is said, Exod. 14. 31. the people beleevd the Lord and his servant Moses, giving us to understand, that though faith respect God onely, yet is there such an Union betwixt him and his Ministers, as indeed and truth, wee cannot beleve him unlesse wee also beleve his Ministers speaking from him. Let us therefore thinke upon it, and especially when they shut up the kingdome

kingdome of heaven, when they denounce the judgements of God against us for any sinne, every man will be ready to take hold of the Word of mercy, and esteeme that as the Word of God himselfe; but in the word of threatening and denouncing of judgement, men make a division betweene God and his Minister: let us take heed of this, and know for a conclusion of this point, that *if we divide betweene God and his Ministers in the word of threatening*, the Lord will punish us in the same kind, he will divide betweene him and his Minister in respect of us in the word of mercy, and in his just judgement he will make his Word of mercy but as the word of man unto us, it shall be unprofitable unto us, wee shall find no true comfort by it: remember the example of *Heraclitus*, hee divided betweene God and *Ishmael*, in the word of threatening for his sinne, and the Lord made all that he heard from *Ishmael*, even the things that he heard gladly, to be unprofitable unto him: he lived and died in his sinnes.

Now to the second Materiall in the Apostles limitation, how this dispensation was conferred upon him, in these words, *[which is given me]* The words are plaine, and are to be taken in their proper signification, which is freely, or of Gods grace bestowed upon me. In that the Apostle saith his ministry and dispensation in the Church of Christ was given him, it pointeth out first this generall instruction, that no man is to undertake that office and function to be a Minister of the Word, and publike dispenser of Gods secrets, but hee to whom it is given of God, that is, he that is inwardly called of God, furnished with competent measure of gifts both of minde and will, for the discharge of that office, and hath also outward approbation of the Church: and for this there be many reasons.

First, because it is Gods order appointed in his Church, that hee that is to teach, should by him be called, and sent, Rom. 10: 15.

Secondly, the Ministry is Gods, and not mans, and therefore Ministers must be sent and deputed of the Lord.

Thirdly, unless they be sent of God, they cannot gather assurance of Gods speciall protection and assistance in their calling, which is necessary for them.

The use of this may be to discover the error and fancy of the Anabaptists, and their followers, who thinke that any man (upon a private motion) may step forth and undertake the duty of a publique Teacher, and may preach and expound the Scriptures, and they allege for themselves that such motion is from the Spirit of God; but (indeede) it is rather from another spirit, even from Satan, and from their owne pride and vanity, and it is an opinion foolish and fantasticall, I will spend no more time in confutation of it.

We are to marke that the Apostle speaking of his ministry and stewardship in Gods house (an eminent office, and of excellent dignity) hath an eye to the first cause and fountaine of it, that it was given and bestowed upon him, that it descended upon him from the meere grace and mercy of God.

Hence wee are taught, that in all the good things of this life wee enjoy, be it dignity, office in the Church, or in the Common-wealth, be it health, wealth, liberty, credit, stocke or store, we are to lift up our eyes to the hills from whence any of these good things come downe: we are to looke to the fountaine whence our streame hath issued, even to the meere grace and mercy of God: we finde it was common and frequent with our Apostle thus to looke upward to the author and giver of every good gift, 1 Cor. 15: 10. *By the grace of God I am that I am*, Ephes. 3: 7: 8. he saith, he was made a Minister of the Gospel by the gift of the grace of God, even to mee the least of all Saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unfearchable riches of Christ, that hee was called by the grace of God: this was commendable in the Apostles, and is worthy our imitation, and it is a duty of great good consequence.

R

First,

Note.

2. Materiall.

Doff. 3.

No man ought to undertake the office of a Minister of the Word, unless it be given him of God.

Reasons.

1

2

3

Vse.

Confutation of an Anabaptistical fancy.

Doff. 4.

In all the good things of this life we doe enjoy, we are to looke up to the giver of them.

Vse.

This duty pra-
ctised, worketh
in us, first
thankfulnesse.
Secondly hu-
mility.

Note.

Motives stir-
ring us up to
the practise of
this duty.

First, it worketh true thankfulnesse: nothing is more effe-
ctuall to draw
out thanks for good things received of men, than to know the things given
to be mere gratuities above desert, and merely from the bounty of the
giver.

Againe, it is a notable meane to humble us; shall we know the good things
we have, are received from the mere grace of God, and shall wee then be proud
of them? It is the Apostles conclusion, 1 Cor. 4. 7. *What hast thou that thou
was not receiued? and if thou hast receiued it, why boastest thou, as though thou
hadst receiued it?* Let us remember this duty, and the rather, because it is the cor-
ruption of our nature, to rest in the things given, and to forget God the Author
and giver; to eat the bread, and not to see God in the bread, as fifth *Exod.*
Moses knowing this inborne corruption, gives this caveat, Deut. 8. 12. *Beware
lest thou forget the Lord, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt.* And this cor-
ruption was growne to full ripeness in *Nebuchadnezzar*, Dan. 4. 27. *Is not
this great Babel that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my
power, and for the honour of my Majesty?* and we know what followed, he was
driven out from men to live with beasts. Let us take heed God deale not with
us as he dealt with him; we may justly feare it, if we have not hearts to see and
consider the mercy and free grace of God in the good things vouchsafed unto
us, that he will drive us out amongst beasts, that is, in his just judgement give
the hearts of beasts, hearts making small delight in those things we enjoy, and
groveling upon them, and not able to lift up themselves towards heaven, which
is an heauie judgement.

And consider wee further whence it is that men see not Gods mercy in out-
ward good things: surely because they see not his fauour towards them in
Christ, in whom right to all the creatures is restored, and by whom onely sweet-
nesse is found in his blessings, and out of him they are but curses. It is not pos-
sible that a wicked man (who findes not Gods grace in Christ) should see his
mercy in outward things, for (indeed) they are not given to him in mercy, but
in judgement, as his portion, and as witnesses of his unthankfulnesse: as it is
said, Acts 14. 17. *God left not himselfe without witness in doing good, giving rain
and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladnesse, and so leave him with-
out excuse.*

If then wee would not (by the just hand of God) be given over to live as
bruit beasts amongst men, feeding and fattening our selves with Gods blessings,
and wanting eyes and hearts to see and consider his mercy in them: If we would
not prove to our selves, and against our selves, that wee see not Gods grace in
Christ, let us leame to raise up our thoughts to see Gods grace and mercy in the
outward good things of this life, given and bestowed upon us, that so wee may
be thankfull to him for them, and use them not to riot, excesse, bravery, and to
set out and to magnifie our selves above others; but to the glory of him that
gave them, and to the good of our selves and others.

It followeth [unto youward] In these words we have the third materiall in the
Apostles limitation, namely, the speciall reference of his ministry; and the mean-
ing is, in respect of you Colossians, and the rest of the Gentiles: That which I
will hence observe shall be this,

Doct. 5.
Pauls Apostleship
had speci-
all relation to
the Gentiles.

Objec.
Ans.

That the Ministry and Apostleship given to Paul had speciall relation to the
Gentiles; yea, he was appointed (by speciall vocation) the chiefe Apostle of
the Gentiles, as Peter was of the Jewes: it appeares plainly, Galath. 2. 17. and
wee finde it in many places of the Acts, that Pauls commission was specially to
preach to the Gentiles, as Acts. 4. 9. If any say the commission of the Apostles
was generall, I answer: it is true, this power and liberty was given, Acts. 1. 2.
Acts. 26. 17. yet afterwards it pleased the Lord in wisdom, for good causes to
order it by a second decree, that Paul should specially have care of the Gentiles,

I say specially: for though *Paul* (occasion being offered) preached to the Iewes, they being dispersed among the Gentiles, yet was hee still the chiefe Apostle of the Gentiles. How then can the Papiſts derive the primacy and ſupremacy of their Pope from *Peter*? the Scripture is plaine that *Peter* was not chiefe Apostle of the Gentiles; therefore admit the Pope to bee his ſucceſſor, and to have his authority (which no wiſe man will grant being Apoſtolicall) yet cannot hee thence derive his authority and power over the Gentiles, they might more probably convey his title of ſupremacy from *Paul*, than from *Peter*, and indeed being driven from this by plaine evidence of Scripture, they would craftily ſeeme to derive their Popes authority from both *Peter* and *Paul*, which is but a meere ſhift, if they hold their owne principles, it is impoſſible.

In the laſt words of this verſe [*to fulfill the word of God*] wee have the end of the Apoſtles miniſtery, that he was a Miniſter of the Church to fulfill the Word of God. By the Word of God, wee are here to underſtand the Goſpell: as appears in the next verſe; and to fulfill it, is to publiſh and to preach it, and the preaching of the Goſpell by the Apoſtle, is called a fulfilling of it, becauſe by it the Gentiles were called, as was foretold by the Prophets, and that worke being wrought and fulfilled on them by the preaching of the Goſpell, the preaching of it is called a fulfilling of it.

That which hence is offered to our conſideration, is from the forme of ſpeech here uſed: the Apoſtle ſaith not, to preach the Goſpell, but to fulfill it. hence followes this concluſion.

That the Goſpell truly preached is not an empty word, but a word filling thoſe that belong to God, with grace and goodneſſe, and the true preaching of it is powerfull to that purpoſe.

Hence it is that the Apoſtle calles his preaching of the Goſpell, the miniſtration of the Spirit, 2 Cor. 3. 8. and he ſaith, the Galathians received the Spirit by preaching of the Goſpell. Gal. 3. 2. and herein lies a principall difference betweene the Law and the Goſpell. The Law doth not miniſter the Spirit, but by the preaching of the Goſpell the Spirit is given.

This muſt teach us to make a precious account of the preaching of the Goſpell, which hath with it (in them that belong to God) the operation of his Spirit and is powerfull to bring them from ignorance to knowledge, from darkeneſſe to light, from the power of Satan, to the glorious liberty of the Sonnes of God, and to make them wiſe to ſalvation, 2 Tim. 3. 15. and let us looke on our ſelves in our naturall condition, before the preaching of the Goſpell hath wrought upon us, what are we? ſurely blind, and ignorant of the wayes of God, walking in the darkeneſſe and vanity of our minds, ruſhing into errors, breaking out into blaſphemies, running into all ſorts of ſinne, yeelding to the ſuggeſtions of Satan, embracing the vanities of the world, following the ſwinge and corruptions of our owne hearts, and lying open to the wrath and iudgements of God, Theſe things ought to move us to make ſpeciall account of the Goſpel preached which doth (in as many as it is powerfull) informe the iudgement, reforme the will, order and ſanctifie the affections, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt.

The Goſpell preached gives the Spirit, the Spirit begets faith, faith apprehends Chriſt, and Chriſt brings ſalvation, therefore make precious account of the preaching of the Goſpell.

Verf. 26. Which is the Myſtery hid ſince the world began, and from all ages, but now is made manifeſt to his Saints.

THis verſe, for the connexion, looketh up to the former, as an explication of that the Apoſtle ſaid in the end of it, of what word he ſpake, namely, of that

R 2

Vſe. 1.
Against the
ſupremacie of
the Pope.

Interpretation.

Doct. 6.
The Goſpel
truly preached
is not an empty
word.

Vſe.
Wee are to
make precious
account of the
preaching of
the Goſpell.

Note.

that *Which is the Mystery hid since the world began*, that is, the word of the Gospel, and for the matter and substance of this verse, it contains a third argument, to perswade the Colossians to continue grounded in the faith.

The argument is taken from the excellency of the Gospel, that the Gospel is a hidden and deepe *Mystery* and so of great excellency : therefore being preached and revealed unto them, they ought to make precious account of it, and to continue in the sound profession of it.

The order and disposition of this verse, in it selfe is on this manner.

First, we have an instance or particular insisting in that part of the Word of God that the Apostle was to publish, even that which is the *mystery*.

Secondly, to this is subioyned a distinct and different condition of this *Mystery*, in respect of distinct and different times, that it is.

{ Hid
and
Manifested. }

Hid, in respect of former and fore-going times, in these words, *Hid since the world began*.

Manifested, in regard of time present, *but now is made manifest*.

Thirdly, to this is added the persons to whom it is manifested, in the last words *to his Saints*.

Interpretation.

Come we to the particular examination of these words, and first of this, *Mystery hid*, in these words, *which is the mystery hid since the world began*. Under the word *Mystery*, that wee are to understand the Gospel, it is evident, by the context ; for the Apostle saith in the verse before, it is the word of God, and in the verse following, the Word, that hath Christ for the matter of it, and that is onely the Gospel. Now the Gospel which contains the doctrine of the humiliation, exaltation, humanity, divinity, office of mediation, and all things concerning the life and death of Christ, is called a *Mystery*, because it is wonderful, deepe, secret, and unsearchable ; for that is the proper and naturall signification of the word (*μυστήριον*) (*Mystery*) and we shall find in Scripture this word alwaies used to signifie a thing secret in religion, Ephes. 5. 32. the Apostle speaking of the neare union and coniunction of Christ and his Church, saith, *τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ ἐν ἡμῶν ὤντος, ἡμεῖς ὁ Χριστός, ὁ ἐκ τῆς ἐκκλησίας*, this is a great secret, we have there the same originall word that here is used, *hid*, or rather as the originall word is (*both beene hid*) *since the world began*, the words are from worlds : the meaning is from all eternity, and from all ages, that is, from all generations of the world, till the coming of Christ in the flesh : the Gospel was hid from the Gentiles simply, and from the Iewes comparatively, in comparison of the cleare light and manifestation of it since the incarnation of Christ : so doth the Apostle expound himselfe, Ephes. 3. 5 *Which in other ages was not opened, as now it is revealed unto his holy Apostles and the Prophets by the spirit*.

Thus then the words are to be conceived, even that secret and unsearchable doctrine of the Gospel, which hath beene hid and kept secret from all eternity and from all generations of the world ; simply from the Gentiles, and in comparison from the Iewes before the incarnation of Christ.

A popish deceit discovered

Here first let it be observed in a word against the false and deceitfull dealings of the Papists, that the word *μυστήριον* is translated by them a *Mystery* in this verse, and in the next verse *Sacrament*, thereby labouring to maintaine their false opinion grounded on Eph. 5. 32. that Matrimony is a Sacrament, and so they translate that place, and thence would they ground it : but (indeed) the opinion is erroneous and false, and that text will not warrant it ; for the opinion it selfe, it cannot be that Matrimony should be a Sacrament.

Reasons proving Matrimony to be no Sacrament.

First, because it was ordained in Paradise before the fall, but the Sacraments of the new Testament were ordained after Christ his coming in the flesh.

Again,

Againe, a Sacrament of the new Testament is an outward seale of Gods grace unto salvation, a seale of righteousness of faith; so saith the Apostle, Rom. 4. 11. which Matrimony is not, neither can the Papists ever prove it so to bee; and therefore no Sacrament: and for the ground of their opinion, they meereley wrest and pervert the text; for the Apostle doth in plaine termes avouch, that he speaks concerning spirituall marriage betweene Christ and his Church: this is a great secret, but I speake of Christ and his Church.

Againe, to say that Matrimony is a Sacrament, because the word *μυστήριον*, *Mystery* is given to it, is most absurd and foolish: for they might as well say, that the Gospell it selfe is a Sacrament, which in this text is so called, but that were as grosse as to say, the seale and the writing are all one; for Sacraments are seals of the covenant of grace written in the Gospell: yea they might as well affirme, that the close working, and secret insinuation of Antichrist into the Church of God is a sacrament, which is called a Mystery, but a Mystery of iniquity, 2 Thes. 2. 7. yea also that name written in the forehead of the whore, Revel. 17. 5. How absurd and foolish then it is to say, that Matrimony is a Sacrament, because it is called by the Apostle, *μυστήριον*, a *Mystery*, any man of the meanest capacity may easily discern.

Let it be further observed that the Word of the Gospell hath this title given to it, that it is a mystery, a deepe secret and hidden doctrine; the consideration of this doth offer this conclusion.

That it is no easie matter truly to understand, know, and beleeve the Gospell, a man cannot easily come to have knowledge and faith in the secrets of the Gospell needfull to be known, and beleeved to his own salvation. For proofe of this that one place is sufficient, 1 Tim. 3. 16. *Without controversie great is the Mystery of godlinesse*: the doctrine of godlinesse, the Gospell, is not onely a mystery, but a great Mystery, full of secrets, and of exceeding profoundnesse and depth, and it is so without all question or controversie: the word significth by all mens confession, that it is an opinion or truth generally confessed of all: and that the Gospell is not easily conceived and beleeved, it were easie to give instance of particulars. We preach Christ crucified unto the Iewes even a stumbling block, and unto the Grecians foolishnesse, 1 Cor. 1. 23. The Athenians (the wisest of all the heathen) said *Paul was a babler or trifler, and setter forth of strange Gods*, when he preached Iesus, the very substance of the Gospell and the resurrection, Act. 17. 18. Yea, come wee to those that make profession of Christ and of his Gospell: some of them are naturall and carnall, and cannot perceive the things of the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 2. 14. Others are regenerate and perceive them, but it is onely in part, and that by the speciall gift of God, Mar. 13. 11.

And the reason of this is, because there is no seed of the Gospell in nature, the Morall Law is written in nature by creation, and since the fall we have some remainer of it in us: the Gentiles shew the effect of the Law written in their hearts, Rom. 2. 15. but the Gospell (the ground of it being Iesus Christ) is above the reach of nature created, of nature in the state of Innocency, and much more of nature corrupted; and therefore it is no easie matter truly to conceive and beleeve the doctrine of the Gospell. And this must teach us to take heed wee deceive not our selves touching our knowledge, and faith in the promises of the Gospell. If wee never felt the might and powerfull worke of God, or the working of his mighty power, as the Apostle speaks, Ephes. 1. 19. to worke in us understanding and faith in the Gospell, but have a faith easily conceived without any supernaturall worke wee have indeed no true faith: it is the faith of the greatest number in the world, even a faith conceived without any hardnesse or paines at all; a faith conceived onely by tradition, because they are bred and borne, and brought up in the bosome of the Church, and have heard it delivered in the Church, that Iesus Christ came into the world, tooke our nature on him,

Doct. 1.

It is no easie matter truly to understand, know, and beleeve the Gospell.

*Reasons.**Use*

We must take heed we deceive not our selves touching our knowledge and faith in the promises of the Gospell.

and suffered death on the Crosse; thereupon they conceive in mind a bare persuasion that Christ is their Saviour, and they can repeat and patter over all the articles of the Creed; yea, some are so grossely ignorant as they repeat them as a prayer, which is ignorance as thicke as the darknesse of Ægypt, it is palpable and may be felt. Thus many doe, and presently they imagine they stedfastly beleeve them, without finding any hardnesse in the matter, or any unbeleefe in their hearts, in respect of any one article of the Creed. I appeale to mens consciences in this case, yea, the speech of many ignorant persons makes it knowne, being asked whether they beleeve the articles of faith, their answer is ready, they never doubted of any one article in all their life, they beleeve them all.

Now what is this (though we seeme to renounce Poperie) but indeed to fall into a dangerous error of popish learning, to have an implicite faith, a faith wrapped up and enfolded in the generall, to beleeve as the Church beleeves? which is a faith easily and soone conceived, to beleeve as the Church beleeves without further adoe. Wee must therefore remember what hath beene now delivered, that it is no easie matter, truly to know and beleeve the doctrine of the Gospell: the Gospell of Christ (being the materiall object of faith) and the mercie of God in Christ (for the remission of finnes) the formall object of it, are great and unspeakable mysteries, and cannot bee comprehended without much hardnesse, and much striving against naturall unbeleefe: and know it for truth, wee never beleeve the Gospell to salvation, till wee can say with a true feeling of our owne weaknesse and want of faith, as hee said in the Gospell, *Lord I beleeve, Lord help mine unbeleefe*: till wee finde and feele the power of Gods Spirit in us, overmastering our naturall hardnesse, and our unbeleefe, touching the secrets of the Gospell: and know for a conclusion of this point, that faith easily gotten, is but a sickle and loose imagination, and in time of triall, or tentation, or great affliction, it will faile us; it is a faith of nature and reason, and not of the spirit of God, and when nature and reason faile, that faith cannot stand.

Note.

Vse 2.

We must come to the hearing of the Gospell preached with humble hearts.

I will adde one other short use of this doctrine: Is it so that it is no easie matter to understand, and beleeve the Gospell, and even the Angels stand amazed, and with admiration desire to behold the wonders of the Gospell? away then with all high conceit of wit: Come wee to the hearing of the Gospell preached with an humble heart, an heart emptied of all swelling conceits; for such as have it are unfit to receive the wisdom of God, they are ill disposed to receive it; yea, God doth resist them, *God resisteth the proud*, Jam. 4. 6. the word signifies, that God doth set himselfe (as it were) in battell array against them, to fight with them, and therefore will not reveale his secrets to his enemies, being to fight with them: pray we then ever with David, P salm. 119. 18. *Open mine eyes that I may see the wonders of thy Law*. That I may see the wonders and great mysteries of thy Gospell; yea, let us not rest in that we conceive of our owne heads, out of the word of the Gospell, or that we heare and learne of our teachers; but let us strive with God by prayer to be also inwardly taught by his Spirit; for here is one cause why some fall from that they have heard and learned, because they pinne their faith on the sleeve of their Teacher and if he fall, they fall with him, because their ground is gone. Let as many as desire to continue stedfast in the truth, never rest in that which they have conceived, either of themselves, or by the teaching of men, but crave that the Lord by his spirit may instruct them, and no doubt the Lord will not send them away empty, but will so season their hearts by his grace, that though thousands fall away on every side, yet they shall continue stedfast in the truth taught and received.

Note.

Diss. 2.

Now from these words [*bid since the world began*] that is, as we shewed from all eternity, is plainly euinced and proved unto us, the eternity of the Gospell. That

That the Gospell is the eternall word of God hid in God, and as ancient as God himselfe.

The inference upon this by way of use might be to prove, that the sending of Christ into the world was decreed, that the permission of the fall of man was decreed, and his redemption by Christ also was decreed in the eternall counsell of God: but I passe by these things, these things are more fit to bee examined and discuffed in the schooles: yet let the eternitie of the Gospell be thought on by as many as truly beleve the promise of the Gospell, it may serve to strengthen and confirme them in never failing comfort: for as many as by true faith rest upon the promise of the Gospell, touching remission of finnes, and justification by Christ, may bee sure that the ground on which they rest will never faile them: the Gospell is eternall, comming out of the bosome of God the Father, therefore as immutable and as unchangeable as God himselfe, and as impossible it is that hee that doth rest upon the promise of the Gospell, touching life and salvation, should bee deceived, as hee that resteth upon God himselfe, who cannot possibly lye nor deceive, *all the promises of God in Christ are, Iea, and Amen*, saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 1. 20. that is, they are certaine, and infallible: and Heb. 6. 18. the promise made to *Abraham*, and in him to all the faithfull, is ioyned with the oath of God, and the holy Ghost there saith: *These are two immutable things wherein it is impossible that God should lie*: that as many as have refuge to hold fast the hope that is set before them, might have strong consolation: and let as many as truly beleve, thinke upon it to their comfort.

It followeth [and from all ages] The next point that is offered from these words (being understood as they have beene formerly expounded) is this, that the vocation or calling of men to life everlasting, is not universall, it reacheth not to all times, places, and persons of the world: the Gospell (by which men are called, as it is cleere from this and other places of Scripture) was not revealed for many generations unto the Gentiles. To enquire into the cause were curiositie and bold presumption; we are rather to adore the secret judgements of God, and (for the revelation of the Gospell to us) to magnifie the mercie of God and to become thankfull: but for the point it is cleere by many testimonies of Scripture, that the Gospell was not revealed to the Gentiles for many ages, it is said, Acts 14. 16. *God in times past* (that is, before the comming of Christ in the flesh) *suffered the Gentiles to walke in their owne wayes*. The Gentiles in times past *were without Christ, yea, without God*, as Atheists in the world, Ephes. 2. 12. *Paul preached where Christ was not so much as named*, Rom. 15. 20. according to the prophecie of Isai. chap. 53. verf. 14. *so whom hee was not spoken of, hee shall bee seene, and that which they had not heard, shall they understand*.

How then can that position and that conclusion held by some be true, that redemption wrought by Christ is universall in respect of the whole world, that Christ died to redeeme all generally without exception, and that some notwithstanding are not saved, is through their owne default, because they will not? This position besides the error of it, in making the sin of the world, death, and hell stronger than Christ, or at least Gods purpose variable, and subject to mans will, which are foule errors: besides this, it cannot stand with the truth of this text: for if redemption be universall, then must it of necessity be universally knowne: for otherwise it is no universall benefit, it is a benefit only to such as know and beleve it; and if it be not knowne, it cannot be beleved.

Now this text makes it cleere, that it was never universally knowne, but rather the contrary: it was hid from many ages, therefore universall redemption is but a device of mans braine, and wee shall finde it to be but a deceiving ground of comfort if wee rest upon this, that Christ died for all, and have no better ground of comfort in time of need, it will faile us: for then will the distressed

The Gospell is the eternall word of God. Ephes. 3. 9.

Use

The eternitie of the Gospell is a ground of sound comfort to all true believers.

Doff. 3.

The vocation and calling of men to life everlasting is not universall.

Use.

That redemption wrought by Christ is universall, is an error.

Note.

distressed conscience be ready to exempt it selfe from the benefit of redemption, and say, Christ indeed dyed for all, if all would receive him; but I by my finnes have cut my selfe off from him, therefore the benefit of his death will doe mee no good: Let us then renounce it as erroneous and false, that redemption by Christ is universall.

Interpretation.

Let us come to speake of the Gospell in respect of the time present [*but now is made manifest to the Saints*]: By the word (*now*) we are to understand this last age of the world, beginning from the coming of Christ in the flesh, and reaching to his second coming to iudgement: all the time of the new Testament, which is called by the Apostle, the acceptable time, the time of grace and day of salvation, 2. Corinth. 6. 2. And that this word hath this signification and extent, the Apostle makes it most cleere, Romans 16. 26. *The mystery kept secret since the world began but now is opened, and published among all nations*: for the word of faith began to be preached to the Gentiles, onely after the coming of Christ in the flesh, and not before, [*to his Saints*] that is, as the Apostle expounds himselfe, Ephes. 3. 5. first and principally to his holy Apostles and Prophets of the new Testament, who were sanctified, and set a part to preach the Gospell: and secondarily, to all the faithfull sanctified by the spirit of Christ. Thus then are the words to be conceived.

But now in this last age of the world, in the time of the new Testament is the Gospell revealed to his holy Apostles and Prophets of the new Testament, and to all the faithfull and sanctified by the Spirit of Christ.

Wee are here to marke the opposite condition of the Gospell in respect of different times, that in former times it was hid from the world, but now is revealed, together with the amplification, to whom, namely to the Saints, taking all together, we are put in minde of this conclusion.

Doct. 4.
Ignorance of the Gospell in them that be of yeeres and discretion, is now in these daies a feareful thing.

That ignorance of the Gospell now under the Gospell, and in the time of the new Testament, in such as be of yeeres and discretion (for of infants, knowledge is not required: they being children of beleeving parents, have title to Christ by the tenour of the covenant of grace, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed*) but in such as be of yeeres, it is a most fearefull thing, though it be no easie matter truly to understand and beleeve the Gospell, in respect of naturall hardness and unbeleeve: yet to the Saints, to them that are sanctified, it is now made manifest: therefore now for them that ought to know, to be ignorant of the Gospell is a most fearefull thing, it scales up want of grace and sanctification. *If the Gospell be hid, it is hid to them that are lost*, 2. Corinth. chap. 4. vers. 3. The Apostle saith in the verse before, that hee did *approve himselfe to every mans conscience in the sight of God*, in the manifest declaration of the truth of the Gospell: and hereupon hee doth inferre, if our Gospell be then hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the God of this world, the Devill, hath blinded the mindes (that is) of the Infidels, that the light of the glorious Gospell of Christ, which is the image of God, should not shine unto them. Hence it is most cleere, that ignorance of the Gospell in such as ought to know it, is a fearefull signe: it shewes not onely want of grace and sanctification, but that God even now sits in iudgement upon such persons, and hath begun to make knowne their reprobation and finall perdition.

Vse.
Reprooffe of them that are now ignorant of the doctrine of the Gospell.

And let this be thought on by all such as are ignorant of the doctrine of the Gospell, and yet ought to know it, and have meanes to know it. Many there be that are so farre from the true knowledge of the Gospell, as they cannot distinguish the truth of the Gospell from error and falshood: yea, some plead for themselves that they are not booke-learned, and therefore (as they imagine) ought to be excused in their grosse ignorance: such persons conclude their owne judgements, and give sentence against themselves, that they want grace, and are in a fearefull condition, howsoever ignorance might, before the manifestation

manifestation of the Gospell, excuse from so great sinne, yet could it not excuse from sinne altogether: but now to pleade ignorance in the cleere light of the Gospell is void of all excuse; yea, it argues that Gods wrath and vengeance hath taken hold on such persons. Many will be ready to exempt themselves from this fearefull condition, and I doubt not, but some may truly say it, that they know the way of salvation, the doctrine of redemption published in the Gospell: and let such persons further consider the argument of the Apostle Rom, 13. 11. that the more knowledge we have, and the neerer we come to salvation, the more we ought to answer it in holinesse, *considering the season* (saith the Apostle) *it is now time that we should arise from sleepe: for now is our salvation neerer than when we beleaved: the night is past, and the day is at hand, let us therefore cast away the workes of darkenesse, and let us put on the armour of light, so that we walke honestly, as in the day, not in gluttony and drunkennesse, neither in chambering and wantonnesse, nor in strife and envying.* If men that know the doctrine of the Gospell walke in gluttony, drunkennesse, chambering, wantonnesse, strife, contention and malice, &c. it argues that the vaines of spirituall life are frozen up in them: yea, these latter finnes are more ugly than the finnes of their former ignorance, the Apostle calls the Galathians fooles, Galath. 3. 1. and why? because they knew not the doctrine of the Gospell? No, but because they did not obey the truth of the Gospell: Christ being in lively and evident manner preached unto them, as if he had beene crucified among them: where the Apostle doth give us to understand, that if the doctrine of salvation by Christ be plainly delivered, and upon the delivery of it, understood and knowne, and yet not obeyed not answered, in faith and repentance, according to knowledge, such persons as so understand and know it, are foolish and bewitched by some enchantment: they are deluded by the secret operation and working of the Devill.

Verf. 27. *To whom God would make knowne, what is the riches of this glorious mystery among the Gentiles, which riches is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*

IN this verse the Apostle doth further set out the manifestation of the Gospel to the Saints, by the efficient cause of it, namely the will of God, in the first words, [*to whom God would make knowne*] then hee doth further commend the mystery of the Gospell.

First by the condition of it, that it is richly glorious (*what is the riches of this glorious mystery.*)

Secondly by the extent (*among the Gentiles.*) And because they might doubt what is meant by *riches of the Gospell*, and might understand his words, as spoken of the riches of glory laid up in heaven, the Apostle doth explaine himselfe in the words following, *which riches is Christ in you, the hope of glory.* In which words is couched a fourth argument to perswade the Colossians to continue in their faith.

Come wee to the words of this verse, as they are laid downe by the Apostle: (*To whom God hath made knowne*) The will of God is one and the same without division and distinction: But for understanding, it is by Divines distinguished into the will of his good pleasure, and his will revealed in his word, the rule of faith and obedience, wee are here to understand the will of his good pleasure according to that of our Saviour. Matthew 11. verf. 26: *At what time Iesus answered, &c. It is so, O Father, because thy good pleasure was such.* When therefore the Apostle saith, *To whom God would make knowne*, his meaning is, to whom God according to the good pleasure of his will would make knowne.

Interpres.

Wee

We are here to marke, that the Apostle is not content to say, that the *mystery* of the Gospell (now in the time of the new Testament) is opened and made manifest to the faithfull, sanctified by the Spirit of Christ: but hee goes further, and sets downe the good pleasure of God, the originall and cause of their understanding and knowledge of the Gospell.

Hence ariseth this point of instruction.

Doct. 1.
The cleare
light of the
Gospell doth
enlighten none
but such as it
pleaseth God
to illuminate.

The first cleere light of the Gospell doth enlighten none but such as it pleaseth God to illuminate. Notwithstanding the manifest revelation of the Gospell now in the time of the new Testament, yet none come truly to understand and know it, but onely such as according to the good pleasure of God, are by him enlightened, onely they to whom it pleaseth God to make it knowne. And for this cause *Paul* prayed for the Ephesians, that *the Spirit of wisdom and revelation might be given them, that the eyes of their understanding might be enlightened, that they might know what the hope is of his calling, and what the riches of his glorious inheritance is in the Saints*, Ephes. 1. 17. 18. And hence it is, that the Apostle saith, 2 Cor. 4. 6. *That God by the same almighty power whereby he brought light out of darknesse at the first creation of all things, doth shine in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Iesus Christ.* Vnlesse it please God to open our eyes, to see the secrets of the Gospell, wee are like the two disciples, Luke 24. that went with Christ to Emaus, who walked and talked with him, and yet knew him not: so we passe along with Christ in the Gospell, and heare him speake unto us, and yet have our eyes held that we cannot know him: daily experience teacheth the truth of this poynt, and there is reason for it, because indeed it is the prerogative God doth reserve particular to himselfe, to make men understand and know the doctrine of the word and Gospell: therefore the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 3. 7. *Paul may plant and Apollos may water, but God only giveth the encrease, where, when, and to whom it pleaseth him.* Some may say; We reade that the word it selfe converteth, Psal. 19. 7. 8. *gives wisdom and understanding, and light to the eyes*, Psal. 119. 130. And therefore it is not peculiar to God to illuminate.

Reason.

Objection.

Ans.

Ans. The word doth convert, enlighten, give wisdom and understanding, onely as an instrument, and that not as a naturall instrument, as having vertue in it selfe as a medicine is a meanes of health: but as an instrument signifying and testifying that which the spirit of God doth inwardly worke, and only where it pleaseth God to worke, there the word doth enlighten. It remaines then a truth, that the cleare light of the Gospell doth enlighten none but such as it pleaseth God to illuminate. The consideration of this may in some sort arme and strengthen us against offence, and may teach us not to be offended, nor to stumble at it, because now in the cleare light of the Gospell, all are not reformed as they ought to be, and because where the word is truly preached, there some continue in their hardnesse and sinne, and are notorious sinners unreformed. Wee must remember that the knowledge of the truth and reformation, is that which onely God must give, and it is given at his good pleasure, and though the Preachers of the Gospell, should with *Paul* with themselves separated from Christ for the winning of men, yet shall no more bee wonne to Christ, than he pleaseth his Father to draw, Ioh. 6. 44. Consider wee the preaching of Christ himselfe: never man did or shall preach with like holinesse and power, were all reformed that heard him? nay, were his owne disciples thoroughly reformed as they ought? no surely, our Saviour doth often iustly reprove their want of faith, and let this then strengthen us against offence, because all men are not reformed by the preaching of the Gospell. Let us know that thus to be offended, is as much as to bee angry with the Lord, for doing with his owne as pleaseth him, and to quarrell with the spirit of God for blowing where he listeth, which is fearefull if it be duely considered.

Vse 1.
Against offence taken at this, that all are not now reformed by the cleare light of the Gospell.

For

For a second use: is it so, that the cleare light of the Gospell doth enlighten none but such as it pleaseth God to illuminate? then let as many as it pleaseth God to enlighten with the knowledge of his truth, magnifie the mercy of God, and be thankfull unto him for that his great goodnesse: wee have the example of Christ himselfe in this kinde. If wee that have the knowledge of the truth, consider how many are left in ignorance, how many are given over to Popish superstition, yea how many living in the same place with us, frequenting the same means of salvation that we doe, and yet remaine in their naturall blindness: wee shall finde that wee have great cause to magnifie the great goodnesse of God towards us, not onely in giving unto us his Gospell, but making us to understand that above many thousands, it is a blessing to have the Gospell brought unto us: but a double blessing is it to have understanding hearts given us, hearts more readily yielding to the truth of the Gospell. Every one that hath this blessing vouchsafed, may justly breake out and say, *Lord, what am I that thou should shew me such mercy? I was borne and brought forth in sinne as other men, I have multiplied and enlarged my finnes, both before knowledge and since: my unthankfulness is great, my unworthinesse greater, yet thou hast vouchsafed me mercy above many thousands. And thus are we to meditate on the mercy of God, in giving us knowledge of the Gospell, and to open our mouthes in praise and thanksgiving for the same.*

Come wee to the commendation of the mysterie of the Gospell in the next words (*What is the riches of this glorious mysterie.*) The words are, what is the riches of the glory of this mysterie, the word (*riches*) is metaphorically borrowed from our ward good things, and doth here signifie plenty and abundance of glory. Wee finde the word used in this sense in many places of the Scripture, Rom. 11. 33. The Apostle speaking of the admirable depth of Gods judgement, breakes out on this manner: *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.* And thus hee calls the unpeakeable bountifullnesse of God, the riches of his bountifullnesse, Rom. 2. 4. (of the glory, (that is) of the excellency of this mysterie, both in it selfe, and in regard of the effect making excellent. Thus then are these words to be conceived, what is the exceeding great and abundant excellency of this mysterie in it selfe, and in the effect of it.

Here first it is to be observed, that the Apostle saith, God would make knowne to his Saints, not barely the mysterie of the Gospell, but the riches of that mysterie: and hence ariseth this conclusion,

That as many as are truly enlightened by the Spirit of God in the knowledge of the Gospell, they know more than the truth and the story of the Gospell. God doth make knowne to his Saints the riches and the glory of the Gospell, the good, the excellent, the sweet and comfortable things of the Gospell, they know the Gospell (as rich men may be said truly to know their riches) when they know them in the use and comfort of them: so they that are truly enlightened, know the Gospell in the right use of it, in the sweet and excellent comfort of it, touching remission of their finnes, peace of conscience, adoption through Christ, joy in the holy Ghost, Ephel. 1. 18. The Apostle prayes for the Ephesians, *that they might know: what?* the bare story of the Gospell? no, but what the hope of glory, and what the riches of his glorious mysterie among the Gentiles is.

The reason of this truth is given by the Apostle, 1 Cor. 2. 9, 10, 11, 12. and it stands thus. God gives to his Saints his Spirit, the Spirit reveales unto them the secrets of the Lord, not onely generall things knowne by the common gift of illumination, but the deepe things of God, the hidden treasures of the Lord, the things eye hath not seene, neither eare hath heard, neither came into the heart of man, which God hath prepared for them that love him: therefore they sticke not in the letter of the Gospell, but finde the marrow and sweetnesse of it. And for

Use 2.

Such as are enlightened by the Gospell, are to be thankfull to God for that mercy.

Interpretation.

Doct. 2.

They that truly know the Gospell, know more than the truth and story of it.

Use.
Triall whether
wee have true
and saving
knowledge of
the Gospell
or no.

Note.

Doct. 4.
The Gospell
hath more ex-
cellent things
in it to content
the minds of
true beleevers,
than the world
hath in it to sa-
tisfie the desires
of worldly min-
ded men.

Use.
Wee are to e-
steeme of the
Gospell for it
selfe, and not to
thinke basely
of it because
it is brought
unto us in ear-
then vessels.

for the use of this point, it may serve as a ground of triall. Hereby wee may try whether we be truly enlightened, and have true and saving knowledge of the Gospell or no.

If we rest not in the letter, in the bare knowledge of the truth and story, but search further, and finde the sweetnesse and comfort of the Gospell, then wee have true knowledge of it.

Now because every one will be ready to assume this to himselfe, that he findes the sweetnesse of the Gospell: some rule of direction is needfull, that in this case we deceive not our selves. Wee are therefore to know that then we finde the sweetnesse of the Gospell, when wee finde that delight and comfort in it, that worldly minded men doe in their riches, and treasures, when wee are affected to it, as to our chiefe treasure, when we finde our desire after it insatiable, and especially when wee finde the comfort of it in time of trouble and distresse (for the most wicked will seeme to finde comfort in the Gospell in time of health and prosperity) but if we can truly say with *David*, *Psal. 119. 50. It is my comfort in my trouble*: Then we have found the sweetnesse of it, then we have true knowledge of the Gospell: and to stirre us up to labour for this, consider but thus much, that not only the Law, but the Gospell also is a killing letter: if we rest in the letter of it, and never search into the Spirit, the life, the sweetnesse, and the comfort of it, yea (as I shewed not long since) nothing doth more all the heart wounded for sinne, than the remembrance of the sweet promise of the Gospell, if it finde it not belonging to it selfe.

Let us then truly pray that we may truly finde out the sweetnesse of the Gospell, that it may stand by us and helpe us in our greatest distresse.

The next thing we have to marke from these words is, that the excellency of the Gospell is laid before us under the termes of riches and glory: two things much affected, and much sought after in the world; yea, these two were the strength of the Divells last and strongest temptation, laid against our Saviour, *Math. 4. 9.* he knowing the power of these two to allure to sinne, hee shewed him all the kingdomes of the world, and said, *All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.*

Hence we may take up this conclusion, that looke what things the world hath in it to satisfie the desires of worldly minded men, and to give them comfort and contentment: the same or rather more excellent things hath the Gospell, in as much as heavenly things are above earthly comforts and contentments: even most excellent to the soules of true beleevers, hath the Gospell in it selfe. For why? the riches of the Gospell is Christ, in whom is found all sweet comfort and contentment, even all the treasures of grace and glory. Hence it is that *Salomon* brings in wisdom (that is) the wisdom of the Father, Christ *Iesus*, *Prov. 8. 18.* saying, riches and honour are with me, even durable riches and righteousness.

Seeing then the Gospell is so rich a treasure in it selfe, we are to esteeme of it even of it selfe, and not to thinke basely of the Gospell, because it is offered and brought unto us in earthen vessels, weake, fragile, miserable, and mortall men, as the Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 4. 7.* We must know that the excellency of the Gospell dependeth not upon any thing out of it selfe, as, not upon the worthinesse of him that brings it, though it be an Angell from heaven, as it was, *Luke 2.* who brought tidings of it to the shepherds: neither doth the unworthinesse of him that is the bringer, any thing diminish or detract from the excellency of the Gospell in it selfe, which is a thing that some in these daies doe stumble at, and thinke that if the messenger be stained with any spot or crime, then they ought not to receive the word of the Gospell at his hand. It were to be wished indeed that all the Ministers of the Gospell, as they are called Angells, had Angelicall purity: but let us take heed, wee fasten not that unworthinesse that is found on

them

them, upon the heavenly and excellent mystery of the Gospell, that was esteemed not that more or lesse excellent, according to the condition of him that brings it: in common reason we know it is absurd, to make the truth or goodnesse of the message depend upon the quality of the messenger: we will with gladnesse receive good newes, or that we are sure concerns our good whosoever brings it, and shall we then refuse the glad tidings and comfort of the Gospell for the fault of those that bring it? We are to try the spirits and doctrines of men, and finding them to be of God, and indeed the word of the Gospell: we are to embrace them as full of heavenly comfort in themselves. And herein follow the example of the Apostle, Phil. 1. 18. he saith, verse 15. some preach Christ through envie and strife, not purely (that is) in regard of their corrupt mindes, for otherwise their doctrine was pure: what then? yet Christ is preached, and therein joy and will joy; and thus are we to joy in the Gospell excellent and comfortable in it selfe, even for it selfe, by whom soever its brought unto us: yea, we are to love the Gospell excellent in it selfe, even for it selfe, not in respect of any thing out of it selfe attending upon it, because it brings with it wealth, peace, and prosperity: for so to love it, is to verifie the Devils argument against Job, that as he said, Job feared God because of his plentie of outward things, so we love the Gospell: yea, this is indeed to love our selves, or to love the Gospell not for it selfe, but for our selves, because it brings advantage, because it brings things pleasing or profitable unto us.

Quest. Some may say, how shall we know we love the Gospell for it selfe in the midst of plentie and abundance of outward things?

Answer. We love the Gospell in the midst of plenty and abundance of outward things, when notwithstanding our plenty, our thoughts ever runne upon the comforts of the Gospell, as David saith, *Ob how love I thy Law, it is my meditation continually*: if it be so with us, though we cannot alwaies be hearing, reading, or talking of the Gospell, yet if we continually meditate and thinke upon it, then we love it indeed.

Another thing to be gathered from these words, understood as they have beene expounded, is this.

That the Gospell is not only of great excellency in it selfe, but doth make all true professors of it most excellent and glorious, Prov. the 4. 8. 9. saith the wise man, *Exalt wisdom, and she will exalt thee, shee shall bring thee honour: if thou embrace her, shee shall give thee a comely ornament unto thine head, yea, shee shall give thee a crowne of glory.*

Our Saviour the wisdom of his Father, and the substance of the Gospell, saith, Pro. 8. 19. *his fruit is better than gold*: he makes more excellent and glorious than all the riches in the world, for (indeed) he makes all that truly beleve in him Kings, and Priests to the Lord, yea fellow heires with him of heaven, and gives them right and title to that crowne of glory, the righteous Lord hath laid up for all that love his appearance: it is therefore a cleare truth that the Gospell makes all true professors of it most excellent and glorious, and therefore it is a meere calumny and slander to say as some doe, that the true profession of the Gospell is the way to beggery and shame.

The Gospell is richly glorious, not onely in it selfe, but in the effect of it: if thou be a true professour of it, it will enrich thee with such glory, as all the world is not able to afford: it will make thee not only gracious and glorious in the sight of God, good Angels, and good men: but thou shalt be honoured in the inward conceits of the very wicked, as we reade, Exod. 11. 3. that *Moses* was very great in the land of Egypt in the sight of *Pharaohs* servants, and there is reason for this: for why?

Glory is ever an undevied companion of goodnesse, as shame is of sinne, and what greater goodnesse than truly to embrace the Gospell: it is worthy obser-

like Lord will
enough
and then
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the true
of the
Gospel

Doct. 4.

The Gospell makes all true professors of it most excellent and glorious.

Vse. 1.

It is a meere calumny that the true profession of the Gospell brings beggery and shame.

Reason.

vation that we finde, yeelded as the reason why such as are called upon for the name of Christ, are blessed, 1 Pet. 4. 14. because *the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon them.* who then shall be able to take glory from them? not all the power of hell: though *Naboth*, 1 King. 21. might seeme to have all the credit and good name quite taken away for ever, being accused, convicted, and executed for no lesse than high treason and blasphemie; yet the Lord who knew his innocency hath cleared him, and in stead of a momentary shame suffered by him, hath given an honourable name, standing upon perpetuall record to to all succeeding ages.

Vse. 2.
The Lord will disappoint them that thinke to get glory by any other thing save onely by the true profession of the Gospel.

Let us then remember it, that the way to become truly excellent and glorious, not only in respect of the eternall waight of glory in heaven, but even in this world, is truly to embrace the Gospel; and if any thinke to make himselfe excellent and glorious by any other thing, let him know the Lord will disappoint him of his purpose, yea though it be by doing that which is exceeding good in it selfe (to passe by such as thinke to advance themselves by sinfull courses, for they shall leave their names as a curse unto Gods chosen, Isa. 65. 15.) For example: by yeelding reverence and due respect to them that bring the glad tidings of the Gospel: if a man hold the feet of them that bring those glad tidings, beautifull, and doe reverence them to get himselfe a name, and doe not also embrace the Gospel brought by them, let such a man be sure, the Lord will frustrate and make void his intention, looke upon the example of *Herod*, Mark. 6. 20. he knowing *John Baptist* (saith the Text) *to be a just man and an holy, he revered him, and heard him:* yea, hee did many things, and heard him gladly; thereby (no doubt) thinking to insinuate with *John*, and to magnifie himselfe, and to get himselfe a name: but wee know the Lord did disappoint him, we repute him not a man of famous memory, but behold in him the very image and picture of infamy, there cleaves a blot to his name for ever: so surely as many as doe reverence them who bring the glad tidings of the Gospel, and so doe a thing commendable in it selfe, but doe it onely to get themselves a name, and doe not withall truly embrace the Gospel it selfe, they shall be disappointed of their purpose; yea, the Lord doth inwardly imprint in the hearts of such, their owne damnation, in that they can witnesse with themselves, they obey not them in the doctrine of the Gospel, whom they doe approve for the grace of God that is in them. Let this be thought on, and let as many as desire to be truly excellent and glorious in the sight of God, and of men and Angels, be stirred up in truth and sincerity of heart to embrace the Gospel; for so doing, they shall be had in an everlasting remembrance, as saith the Psalmist, Psal. 112. 6. yea God will then undertake the protection of their names, and will preserve them as their owne salvation. It followeth [*among the Gentiles*] that is, among all nations of the world besides the Jewes: this doth shew that God doth not reveale his Gospel, according to foreseene merits, he (in the time appointed by himselfe) made knowne the riches of the glorious mysterie of the Gospel, to the Gentiles, lying in darknesse and grosse ignorance, yea without God in the world, as the Apostle saith, Eph. 2. 12. Yea, we shall find that the Jewes (before the comming of Christ) were not preferred above the Gentiles, in knowledge of the will of God for their merit: if we reade *Stephens* testimony of them, Act. 7. 51. to 54. and joyned to this that of *Ezekiel*, 16. from 3. to 7. we shall easily yeeld to this truth, that the Lord doth not call to salvation and reveale his truth, for any merit foreseene: it is the error of the Papists, who hold the election of God, and consequently, the revelation of his truth, to be for merit foreseene: we are to renounce this as a grosse error, and for the Gospel brought and revealed unto us (we being part of the Gentiles) to magnifie the mercy of the Lord.

Vse
Confutation of the Papists.

Now to the last words of this verse, which are an exposition of the Apostles meaning, what we are to understand by the riches of the Gospel, and containe

also

also a fourth argument to perswade the Colossians to continue in the faith, the argument is from the matter and substance of the Gospel; that the matter and substance of the Gospel, and the subject of all true preaching of the Gospel, is Christ our Saviour and Redeemer, by whom we looke for life and glory, and therefore they ought to continue stedfast in the profession of the truth of the Gospel: that is the purpose and drift of the Apostle, in these words, and of the beginning of the next verse [*whom we preach*] the words are [*which is Christ in you the hope of glory*] the word *which* doth plainly shew in the original to what it hath relation, namely, to riches, and so the word *riches* may very well be supplied, [*Christ in you*] For the better conceiving of these words, wee must understand that Christ his being in us is not locall or corporall, but spirituall and supernaturall. Christ is in us after a spirituall manner, namely, by his Spirit, in respect of Christ himselfe, and by faith in respect of us; for these are the spirituall bonds by which Christ is knit to us, and we to him; and we find Christ his being in us expressed in Scripture in this manner, that he dwelleth in us by his Spirit, 1 Ioh. chap. 2. verf. 27. and againe by faith, Ephes. chap. 3. verf. 17. And that we mis-take not Christ his being in us, we must know further, that the Spirit of Christ is in us, and not in essence and substance, but in operation, hee working in us both our justification and sanctification, hee both applying Christ unto us, and quickening us by his grace to newnesse of life: (*hope of glory*) that is, by whom we certainly hope and looke for glory in Heaven.

Hence is Christ called our hope, 1 Tim. 2. 8. Thus then the words are to be conceived,

Which riches is Christ being in you by the apprehension of Faith, and by the operation of the Spirit of Christ, by whom we certainly looke for glory in Heaven.

From the argument here used by the Apostle, take notice of a grosse error of popish doctrine. The Papists teach, that the Gospel is nothing else in effect, but the Law of Moses made perfect, the Law written in mens hearts by the holy Ghost: if this were true, then should the Law and the Gospel be all one in substance, and differing onely in degree of perfection, then should Christ have beene revealed in the Law, which is false; the Law never knew Christ, nor faith in Christ, the Mediator, God and man: the Apostle here makes Christ the substance of the Gospel, and therein placeth the riches and excellency of the Gospel, which indeed were no preferment at all, if the Law and the Gospel were all one, it is sufficient to have named this. The next thing wee have to marke is, that the Apostle saith, the riches of the Gospel is not only Christ, but Christ in us. The Gospel doth propound and set before us Christ, not onely in his owne person, nature and office, but also in us by the apprehension of faith, and application of his Spirit.

Hence wee may gather, that to whomsoever Christ is a Saviour, hee is not a Saviour altogether out of himselfe; hee is so a Saviour to every one, as hee is propounded and set forth in the Gospel.

Now in the Gospel hee is set before us, not onely a Saviour out of us, but also in us; and therefore to whomsoever Christ is a Saviour, hee is not a Saviour altogether out of himselfe: let no man misconster my speech, and mistake this conclusion, it may be understood as a favouring and giving allowance and strength to a popish opinion, namely this, that Christ is a Saviour in us, by communicating and giving merit to our workes, and making them meritorious, as the Papists teach: this indeed is to make Christ not an absolute and perfect Saviour by himselfe, as we are taught, Hebr. chap. 7. verf. 25. but onely an instrument by whom we must save our selves, and there is no truth in this, because Christ is not one with us by personall union, which is the ground of all merit,

Interpretation.

A grosse error of the Papists confused.

Doff. 6.
To whomsoever Christ is a Saviour, hee is not a Saviour altogether out of himselfe.

How Christ is
a Saviour in
some sort in
us.

even in Christ himselfe; when therefore (I say) to whomsoever Christ is a Saviour, hee is not a Saviour altogether, out of himselfe: my meaning is, according to the truth of the Word of God, that hee is a Saviour unto him, not onely by the merit of his death and obedience, procuring pardon of sinne, and right to life eternall, but also by his efficacy, by his effectuall working in him by his Spirit, working faith in his heart to apprehend his merit, and purging his heart from corruption, and turning it from sinne to God. And for prooffe of this wee have some pregnant places of Scripture, Titus 2: 14. saith the Apostle, *Christ gave himselfe for us that hee might redeeme us from all iniquity, and purge us to be a peculiar people unto himselfe, zealous of good worker*; not only to be a Redeemer from the guilt and punishment of sinne, but also from the corruption of sinne, 1 Pet. chap. 1. vers. 18. saith the Apostle, *wee were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as with a lamb undefiled, and without spot*: from what? from our vaine conversation, saith the Apostle. Whence it is cleare, that Christ is a Redeemer of men, not only from deserved condemnation, and so a Redeemer out of themselves, but even in them by the operation of his Spirit redeeming, that is, freeing and delivering them from the corruption of sinne, and from wicked conversation, the fruit of it.

And therefore to whomsoever Christ is a Saviour, to him hee is a Saviour, not altogether out of himselfe.

Reason.

The reason and ground of this is evident, because Christ is a Saviour, not onely by performing the outward worke of redemption, but by application of that worke, to the justification, and sanctification of as many as are redeemed.

Now the application of the worke of Redemption is, by the inward worke of his Spirit; and therefore to whomsoever Christ is a Saviour, to him in this sense he is a Saviour not altogether out of himselfe.

Vse
Reprooffe of
them who
thinke that
Christ is their
Saviour alto-
gether out of
themselves.

A point (haply) not knowne to a great number in the world: most men imagine Christ to be their Saviour, but altogether out of themselves: and herein doth the Divell take advantage upon our doctrine, the doctrine taught in our Church; that in the matter of justification in Gods sight, and in the matter of salvation, wee must goe out of our selves, and seeke for justification and salvation onely in Christ. Hereupon doth the Divell take the hint and delude many thousands, perswading them it is sufficient if they beleewe, or rather fancy to themselves, that they are justified and also saved by the merit of Christ; by Christ a Saviour altogether out of themselves, though they never finde Christ a Saviour in them by way of application of his merit to their justification and sanctification.

Note.

It is true (indeed) wee must goe out of our selves in the case of justification and salvation in respect of merit, and seeke for that onely in Christ, and rest only on him for that: but wee must also finde Christ in us by the worke of his Spirit, applying his merit to our justification, and cleansing us to our sanctification, that is, wee must finde Christ a Saviour unto us, out of us by his merit, and in us by the efficacy of his Spirit; and to stirre us up to labour for this, know it for a truth, that wee can never have assurance that Christ hath saved us by his merits, till we finde he hath in some measure also wrought in us, and purged us by his Spirit. He that is saved by Christ from hell, is by him also turned from sinne to God; and if this be wanting, there can be no assurance of the former. It is the Apostles owne conclusion. If upon examination we finde not Christ in us, it seals up a fearefull conclusion; namely this, that we are yet in the state of damnation, 2 Cor. 3. 5. let as many as tender their owne salvation thinke upon it, and never rest till they finde Christ a Saviour out of them by his merits, and in them by the powerfull operation of his Spirit. Let us further observe as a
ground

ground of another instruction, that the Apostle saith, Christ in us is the hope of glory: hence ariseth this conclusion.

That as many as have a true hope of eternal life, they have it upon this ground that Christ is in them apprehended by faith, and dwelling in them by his Spirit, no man can truly hope for life and salvation unless Christ be in him.

The reason is plaine, because true hope is the daughter of true faith, faith doth first apprehend Christ, and then followes hope, which is a certaine expectation of the accomplishment of the promise in Christ, and of full fruition of righteousness which shall bee revealed when Christ our righteousness shall appeare, as saith *S Iohn 1 Epist. 2. 2.* therefore no man can truly hope for life and salvation, but on this ground that Christ is in him.

Let this serve to discover to wicked persons who live in their ignorance and sinne, their folly; they commonly promise to themselves happiness, life and salvation, and they hope to bee saved as well as the best, though they live in their sinnes, and follow after their sensuall pleasures even with greedinesse: but let them know, this is a meere illuding and deceiving of themselves: this is to build the hope of salvation upon a rotten ground, upon sinne ruling in them, not upon Christ in them the ground of true hope.

Oh, but they certainly looke to have hope in their death, they trust at the last gaspe to call to God for mercy, and to get the pardon of their sinnes, and to find Christ in them to the saving of their soules.

Thus (indeed) wicked men flatter themselves, and thus they still discover more and more their folly: for what (I beseech you) is this, but to thinke that death and the pangs of it, are appointed for the begetting of true hope in them: which is all one as if theeves (and other malefactors) should thinke the day of Assises were appointed for their preferment, and to advance them to some dignity: let them consider what the wise man hath said: When a wicked man dieth, his hope perisheth, and the hope of the uniuert shall perish, *Prou. 10. 28.* even that which he hopes for doth vanish and deceive him; and let them remember that threatening sentence of the Lord, *Deut. 29. 20.* it is able to shake their hearts, that if any man who walketh on in a course of sinne, blesse himselfe, and promise himselfe peace and happiness, hope and comfort; the Lord hath said in expresse words, he will not be mercifull to that man: how then can hee hope to die blessedly who lives wickedly? now the Lord cannot faile of his iustice and truth to execute that he hath threatened.

Let this therefore stirre us up to labour to put our soules out of danger before death, sicknesse and trouble come upon us; let every one of us indeavour by all good meanes, that we may truly say with the Apostle, *Gal. 2. 20.* *Thus I live, yet not I now, but Christ liveth in me: and in that I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Sonne of God, who hath loved me, and given himselfe for me:* and that will make our life prosperous, our death full of hope and comfort, and our state in the world to come immortall and glorious.

Verf. 28. *Whom we preach, admonishing every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Iesus.*

The Apostle in this verse doth first affirme, that the subiect of his, and of the other Apostles preaching, was Christ, (*whom we preach:*) then hee doth further branch and divide his preaching into two heads, *videlicet.*

Admonition
and
Instruction.

Admonishing and teaching: and hee doth amplifie both these by the common object of them, (*every man*) and againe, his instructing of every man

Doct. 7.

None can truly hope for life and salvation, unless Christ be in them.

Reason.

Vse.

The discovery of the folly and vaine hope of ignorant and wicked persons.

Object.

Answer.

by the matter of it, namely (*wisdome*) and that true and perfect *wisdome*, (*in all wisdome*) then hee subjoynes the end of his preaching, and admonishing in the last words, *that we may present every man perfect in Christ Iesus*: these are the generall things propounded in this verse.

Whom we preach] That is, which Christ we preach; whereas the Apostle saith, the subiect of his preaching was Christ, I will onely note this one thing briefly.

The matter of true preaching is Christ Iesus, and one speciall note by which we may know doctrine delivered to bee sound and good, is this: that it sets out unto us *Christ Iesus*, with all due respect of his glory in the worke of redemption and with due regard of the honour of his name, as the onely King, Priest, and Prophet of his Church. Hence it is that the Apostle, Galath. 3. 1. calls the truth of the Gospel preached among the Galatians, a lively description of Christ, as if hee had bene crucified among them: and S. Iohn, 1 Ioh. 4. 1. teaching us not to beleewe every spirit, *but to try the spirits* and doctrines of men, whether they bee of God or no: among other notes set downe by him, whereby we may be able to discerne the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. This is the first note of difference, that the doctrine is good, and of God, that is, founded on Iesus Christ incarnate.

And by this I might shew the error of many points of Popish doctrine: as their making Christ a Saviour in us, by communicating merit to our workes, their mingling of his bloud with the bloud of the Martyrs, in way of satisfaction for sinne, their ioyning with him intercession of Angels and Saints, and many other of like sort: wherein they exceedingly detract and derogate from the honour of the Kingly, Priestly, and Prophetick office of Christ: and so teach not sound doctrine. but I passe from thence to the next words. [*Admonishing*] The originall word *admonishing*, doth signifie propounding something that is amisse to the mind to be thought on and to be corrected and amended and reprov- ing for the same, and teaching, that is, instructing everyone in the truth, what he is to hold and beleewe: [*in all wisdome*] that is, in true and perfect *wisdome*: it is usuall in Scripture to put the note of universality (*all*) to note excellency and perfection: thus then we are to conceive these words; *Admonishing every man* that is, setting before the minde of every one what is amisse to be amended, and reprov- ing for the same, and instructing him in the truth, what hee is to hold and beleewe in true and perfect *wisdome*.

Here first we are to marke the order of the words of the Apostle, he sets ad- monition before teaching, *admonishing every man*, and teaching: hence ariseth this conclusion.

That by the preaching of the Word, wee must first bee brought to a fight of our sinnes, and then taught what to hold and beleewe.

First, we must be admonished and shewed our error and state of sinne, and made to see our sinne, and then instructed how to come out of it: and in this or- der of teaching hath Christ himselve gone before us, Ioh. 4. hee first shewed the woman of Samaria her sinne, that shee lived in adultery, before hee taught her that hee was the Messias, and what shee was to hold and beleewe touching him. We may observe it in the Sermon of Peter, Act. 2. hee first laid before the Iewes their sinne, that they had slaine the Lord Iesus, and then upon their touch and remorse of conscience, he said unto them, verse. 38. Amend your lives and be baptized every one of you in the name of *Iesus Christ*, for the remission of sinnes, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy Ghost. If wee looke into the booke of God, we shall finde that this hath bene the order of all true Prophets, Apostles and teachers from time to time, and the reason is that which is given by the A- postle, *The Law is our Scholemaster to bring us to Christ*, wee must first bee made to see our sinnes, and the danger of them without remedy, and so driven by the

Law

Doct. 1.

The matter of true preaching is Christ Iesus.

Confutation of many points of Popish doctrine.

Interpret.

Doct. 2.

We must first be brought to a fight of our sinnes by the preaching of the word, and then be taught how to come out of them.

Reason.

Law out of our selves, to seeke remedy in the Gospell, and therefore wee must first be admonished, and then instructed.

The use of this doctrine (besides the method that concerns teachers) is this, it may serve as a rule of tryall, whereby hearers of the Word may try whether they have truly profited by the preaching of the word or no, they may know it by this, If they have first beene brought to a sight of their finnes, and truly humbled and cast downe, and after that brought to beleve in Christ for the pardon of their finnes, then they have truly profited by preaching; for as it is the right order of teaching, first to admonish and to shew sinne, and then to instruct; so it is the right order of receiving the Word taught, and profiting by it: and never any of Gods children were throughly comforted by the Word, but they were first truly humbled by it. It is a preposterous and disordered course of learning to learne as some doe, that mercy and salvation comes by Christ, and with that to content themselves, not suffered themselves first to bee schooled by the Law, till they dispaire in respect of themselves, and so come to Christ, and finde comfort in him; and that we may be resolved of it, that it is (indeed) a preposterous course of learning: wee must know that the very gate to true repentance, is a true contrition and compunction of heart, a true sorrow for sinne: for though it cannot be denied, but that Gods free grace and mercy is the foundation of true repedance, repentance following faith, not onely in time, but in the order of nature, yet first must the heart bee mollified, and by godly sorrow made plyable and fit to receive Gods grace, otherwise it will not enter: the fallow ground of the heart must first be plowed, and then the seede of Gods grace cast into it, as saith the Prophet, *Ierem. 4. 4. Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thornes*: therefore they are deceived, who will needes bee held truly repentant for their finnes, and yet never felt in their hearts any measure of true sorrow: haply they have had (by a generall sight and sence of sinne, wrought by the word or iudgements of God, some light and vanishing touch of conscience, causing them to send forth a naturall sigh or sob: but their hearts were never truly pressed downe with the weight of any one sinne: they skip over the first degree, and will needes bee graced with the highest degree of repentance at the first, even true conversion and turning from sinne to God which is a thing impossible. If we will be saved, wee must know that true sorrow for sinne is necessary, wee must every one drinke his measure of that cup; wee must first be schooled by the Law, and feeble the sharper rod of that schoole-master, we before wee can come to bee good scholars in the schoole of Christ: let every one (by this) examine how hee hath profited by the hearing of the Word.

We are in the next place to marke, the Apostle saith, *admonishing every man, &c.* That which hence followeth is this, That the Word preached admonishing and instructing, teacheth all and every one, of what calling, sexe, state or condition soever they bee, and so ought to bee heard and received: whether it promise mercy, or threaten iudgement, we are to make use of it to our selves particularly: it is commonly seene, if a priviledge, immunity or common benefit be granted to any place, every man will have part in that; but if it bee a matter of charge, then they post it off to others: so if the Word promise any mercy, every man (even with uncleane hands) will lay hold on that: but if the Word bee drawne out against any sinne, the guilty persons will commonly post that off to others: as if drunkenness be spoken against, he that is guilty will see if hee can espy any other in the congregation tainted with that fault; and if hee doe, then hee thinkes the Preacher speakes to that other, and not himselfe. This is a sinne as ancient as Adams fall, *Adam* hee posted off his sinne to *Eve*, and *Eve* to the *Serpent*.

Let us take heed of this, it is a dangerous corruption, when a man is touched by

Use

Triall whether we have truly profited by the preaching of the Word or no.

Note.

Doctrine 3.

The Word preached teacheth all and every one, and so ought to bee heard.

Use.

It is a fault to post off the reproofe of the Word from our selves to others.

by the word, and his owne conscience tels him his sinne is spoken against, then as we use to say, to set a good face on the matter, and to bite in all tokens of repentance, because he would not have it thought, that the word came so neere him: who so thus hardneth his heart, may iustly feare, that hereafter hee cannot repent, they goe together, Rom. 2. 5. *after thine hardnesse, and heart that cannot repent,* and so hee shall heape up wrath against the day of wrath. [In all wisdom.] In that the Apostle saith, the matter of his teaching was true and perfect wisdom, hee preaching Christ, and teaching the Gospell of Christ; I might stand to shew the perfection and insufficiency of the word of the Gospell, that it is sufficient, and alone sufficient to make men truly wise unto salvation: but I passe by that.

Dott. 4.

Every one truly wise hath his wisdom from the teaching of the word of Gods.

Reason.

In that the Apostle makes true and perfect wisdom, the particular matter of his teaching and instructing of every man, wee may conclude that every man truly wise, hath his wisdom from the teaching of the word of God: no man is truly wise, but so farre forth as he is taught by the word, and doth follow the teaching of the word: for why? the word is indeed true wisdom, the wisdom of God revealed, manifesting such things as flesh and blood was never able to reach unto, therefore it must needs be that no man is truly wise, but as he is taught by the word, and doth follow the teaching of the word, and hath his wisdom as a streame flowing and derived from the word. Hence it is that Moses said to the people, Deut. 4. 5. *I have taught you ordinances and lawes, as the Lord my God commanded mee, that ye should doe even so within the land, whether ye goe to possesse it: then verse 6. Keep ye therefore and doe them, learne and follow them, for that is your wisdom.* And Jeremy the Prophet, speaking of such as made no conscience to follow the teaching of the word, saith, *Loe they have reiected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them?* Iere. 8. 9. as if he had said, None at all.

Use

If we would be truly wise, our wisdom must come by the teaching of the word of God.

Would we then be truly wise? no doubt every one desires it, the most simple witted are loth to be counted foolish, yea, the most wicked affect wisdom, Pharaoh and his counsell, though their cursed meeting favoured of nothing but cruelty and blood, yet they would shroud it under the covert of wisdom, *Come let us worke wisely with them,* &c. Exod. 1. 10. But would wee indeed bee wise? let us then looke that our wisdom come by the teaching of the word, that it be a streame issuing out of that fountaine, true wisdom comes not by the teaching of nature, by the rules of Art, or worldly policy, by observation of outward things, or common experience, a man may be exceeding wise according to these grounds, and yet have not any dramme of true wisdom, but in the account of God himselfe, bee a very foole, Luke 12. 20. the rich man there spoken of, was worldly wise, he could get, save, keepe, and thinke of laying up his goods against time to come, and yet God said unto him, *thou foole, this night will they fetch away thy soule from thee.* True wisdom is derived onely from the word, and every man so farre forth wise, as he is taught by the word, and doth follow the teaching of the word.

Speciall notes of true wisdom.

Now because every one will be ready to take this to himselfe, that his wisdom is derived from the word, and that hee according to the measure of his knowledge and grace, doth follow the teaching of the word. I hold it fit to lay downe some speciall notes and markes, by which wee may know that our wisdom is (indeed) derived from the word, and that our wisdom is taught by the holy Ghost: and to this purpose reade I am. 3. from verse 13. to the end of the chapter. It is there said, that *the wisdom that is from above, true and heavenly wisdom, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easie to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without iudging, and without hypocrisie:* these are the fruits that be in true wisdom, and issue out from it: hereby then wee may try whether wee bee wise by the teaching of the word and spirit or no, if our wisdom bring

bring forth purity, gentleness, easiness to be entreated being offended, &c. then is our wisdom true and heavenly: but on the contrary, if we be full of envying and strife, and implacable; as many are that would be reputed jolly wise men and women, they are full of envie, yea, such as can never be appeased, being once (it may be, without cause) offended, ready to believe every flying tale, and to judge amiss; certainly, then our wisdom is not from the teaching of the Word, and descended from above, but earthly, and fetcht from the pit of hell: yea, the more cunning wee are to hide our malice, or to worke the hurt of our brethen by word or deed, the more foolish are wee: hath not Satan more subtiltie and cunning to worke mischief, than all the men of the world? yet (indeed) he is the most foolish creature that is, for hee doth nothing but worke his owne woe. Let us therefore labour to be wise by the teaching of the word, and that wee be not deceived, often remember wee the words of the Apostle, that true wisdom is pure, peaceable, gentle, easie to be entreated, full of mercie and good fruits, &c.

The last words of this verse containe the end of the Apostles preaching, (*that wee may present every man perfect in Christ Iesus*) The originall word translated (*present*) is judiciall, borrowed from open courts and places of judgement; where men are brought and set before a Judge to be tried and examined, and the Apostles meaning is, that wee may set every man at the great day of the Lord, before his tribunall and judgement seate: (*perfect*) that is, perfectly just and holy, not onely in regard of justice and righteousness imputed, (for so all true beleevers are perfectly just, in this life: hee that truly beleeves in Christ, hath the perfection of the Law, and is as just as if hee had fulfilled the whole Law) but perfectly just and holy in regard of righteousness and holiness inherent, and that perfect in degree, (*in Christ Iesus*) that is, as a member of Christ. Thus then the words are to be conceived, that wee may set every man before the judgement seate of God at the day of judgement, perfectly iust and holy, not only in regard of holiness and righteousness imputed, but in regard of inherent holiness and righteousness wrought in him by the Spirit of God as a member of Christ Iesus.

Now here wee are first to marke that the Apostle saith, hee and other Apostles preached Christ, admonished and taught men, not to make them perfect in regard of holiness inherent in this life, but to present them holy at the barre of Gods judgement in the life to come. The point of instruction from hence is this: That wee may in this life proceed from one measure of faith as it is a quality, to another, and from one measure of holiness to another: but wee cannot come to absolute perfection till this life be ended, Ephes. 4. 13. the Apostle saith plainly, that it cannot be till we meete altogether (in the unity of faith and knowledge of the Sonne of God) unto a perfect man, and unto the measure of the age of the fulnesse of Christ: hee there teacheth that the ministry of the word shall endure till we meete together, &c. giving us to understand, that then it shall cease: now the ministry of the word shall not cease, but continue, as the same Apostle teacheth, 1 Cor. 15. 24. till the end of the world: and therefore before the end of the world there shall be no meeting together in the unity of faith, nor any absolute perfection to be hoped for: and the reason of it is, that we finde in 1 Cor. 13. 9. *we know in part, therefore wee beleeve in part, and are sanctified but in part.*

The Apostle saith, Philip. 3. 14. *Let as many as be perfect, &c.* therefore perfection is to be had in this life?

The Apostle there speakes not of absolute perfection, such as shall be in the life to come: of that he said, verse 12. that he had not yet attained to it, but hee speakes of a perfection in comparison, as perfection is opposed to weakenesse in knowledge, or faith, and compared with it: and his meaning is, let as many

Interpretation.

Dott 25.

Wee may in this life proceed from one measure of faith and holiness to another; but wee cannot come to absolute perfection.

Reason.

Object.

Answer.

Vse
Our duty is, so long as we are in this life, to goe on from one measure of grace to another.

as be strong in knowledge or faith, be thus minded. The Author to the Hebr. 14. faith, *Strong meate belongeth to them that are of age.* The word is (*perfect*) his meaning is of some maturity, and ripenesse in knowledge; and through long custome had their wits exercised to discern both good and evill: and therefore notwithstanding this, it remains a truth, that we may in this life proceede from one measure of faith and holinesse to another, but wee can never come to an absolute perfection. The Anabaptists dreame of an absolute perfection of holinesse in this life: but to passe by them, our duty following from hence is this: it behoves every one of us in this regard, never to set downe our rest in any grace, but ever to be striving forward, and to goe on from one measure of faith and grace to another: and to this purpose, we are to propound unto our selves, and to set before us the best examples for our imitation, as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 11. 1. *Be ye followers of mee as I am of Christ:* This is that which deceives many of us: we looke downeward, and compare our selves with such as are of meaner gifts and graces than our selves: and we thinke all is well, because we are not as the worst, though we never strive to come neere the best. Haply some of us have a measure of knowledge, and wee rest in that knowledge, we know the Sacraments to be holy seales of Gods covenant of Grace, but wee have little or no care to use them. Wee know prayer to be excellent, but wee make no conscience to use it, onely for fashion publicely, but very seldom privately with our families. This is to set downe our rest in knowledge, and not to strive to goe on: and let us take heed of it; if we find the love of the word and Sacraments, the liking of prayer, &c. that should be joyned to our knowledge, stolne out of our hearts, wee have cause to feare that sinne will deceive us, and creepe on to a further degree, even to the hardening of our hearts, that we shall not perceive it, and to the blinding of our mindes that we shall not see it. Wee may not thinke that *Sodome, Saul, Judas*, and such like, were at the height of their sinne at the first: but they went on by degrees, from one degree of sinne to another: and certainly, if wee goe not forward in grace we goe backward, and we grow in sinne, and going on in sinne, we shall come at length to be hardened, and to the height of sinne, and to pull downe the wrath of God upon us.

Let this therefore stirre us up, not to set downe our rest in any grace, but let us strive to goe on from knowledge to practice, and from one measure of grace to another.

Doct. 6.
The state of perfection is not proper to some sorts and orders of men.

Confutation of a Popish distinction touching perfection.

Note we one thing more in a word, in that the Apostle saith, present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, &c. wee may gather that the state of perfection is not proper to some sorts and orders of men, as the Papists teach, but every member of Christ is perfect, in respect of righteousness imputed in this life, and shall be perfect in regard of holinesse inherent in the life to come.

But the Papists distinguish, and say, there be two kindes of perfection, a lesse, consisting in keeping the Law necessary to salvation: a greater, in observing the counsels of Christ, not simply necessary to salvation, but to obtaine a greater degree of glory: this distinction is most absurd.

For first, counsels be commandements; and againe, can there be a greater perfection, than the absolute fulfilling of the Law? it is not possible.

If any man be able to fulfill the Law of God, hee is most perfect, hee is in that respect perfect according to the example of Christ: therefore there can be no greater perfection, it is absurd to say, there can be greater perfection.

Verf. 29. *Whereunto I also labour and strive, according to his working which worketh in me mightily.*

IN this verse the Apostle setteth downe.

First, what hee did in respect of the end of his preaching before spoken of, (namely)

(namely) that he did labour and strive to attaine that end (*Wherunto I also labour and strive.*)

Secondly, by what power he so laboured, not by his owne, but by the working power of Christ (*according to his working.*)

Then followeth the subject of that working power wherein it wrought, and was effectuall (namely) himselfe (*which worketh in me.*)

To which is added the measure, how much it wrought in him, in the last word (*mightily*).

Wherunto (that is) unto which thing formerly spoken of, *I also* (that is) I for my part (labour and strive) the words are (labour striving) the meaning is, to which end I contend, not onely with labour and paines serving to that purpose, and tending to that end, but with wrestling and striving against all adversary power that doth oppose against it, to hinder the attainment of that end. Thus then the first words are to be conceived. Unto which thing I for my part endeavour and contend, not onely labouring and doing such things as tend to that purpose, but striving against all things that oppose it, and hinder the attainment of that end.

Now here we are to marke, that the Apostle saith not, that hee barely propounded this as the end of his preaching and admonishing, that hee might present every man perfect in Christ Iesus: but hee did labour and strive to attaine it: hence we may take this generall conclusion.

That every man in his personall and particular calling, wherein hee is set for the glory of God, and the good of men, is to doe the duties of his calling with diligence, he is not onely to doe the duties appertaining to his place, after the example of the Apostle, but to doe them with labour and paine, breaking through all difficulties, and all things that stand up against him, to hinder him in the diligent performance of them, Eccles. 9. 10. The preacher saith, *all that thine hand shall finde to doe, doe it with all thy power*: not onely doe it, but doe it with all thy power: as if he had said, follow the workes of thy vocation, and employ all the powers of the minde, about the discharging of it faithfully, Paul bids him that ruleth, not onely to rule, but with diligence, and every man that hath an office or calling, to wait on it with care and diligence, Rom. 12. 7. 8. the reasons of this duty are two.

First, because it is appointed to man by Gods order, laid on him presently after the fall, that he should not onely labour and travell, but with paines. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eate bread, till thou returne to the earth, that is, till thy death, Gen. 3. 19.

Secondly, because the Lord hath given unto man both a body and a minde, that both these might be used and employed in the workes of his calling, that he should doe them not onely with his body, for so doe bruite beasts, the Oxe and the Asse; but man must doe the workes of his calling with his body, and with earnest intention of his minde, and so with care and diligence.

We see then the duty proved, and the reasons of it: but that we be not deceived in the practice of it, two rules must be remembred.

First, our diligence in doing the duties of our calling, must be with respect to the will and commandment of God: for diligence is required by his commandment, and we are to be diligent in performing the duties of our callings, in conscience and obedience to Gods will and commandment, not for pride, covetousnesse, or upon compulsion, or other by-respects: such as doe the duties of their callings in these respects painfully, may be said to be great workers, but nothing diligent.

Secondly, our diligence must be with direction of our labours to the end of our callings, in the diligent performance of our duties, wee must drive at the end of our personall callings, that wee may attaine that end: The example of our Apostle

2

3

4

Interpretation.

Doct. 1.

Every man is to doe the duties of his particular calling with diligence.

Reason 2.

1

3

2 Rules.

Vse
Our duty is, so long as we are in this life, to goe on from one measure of grace to another.

as be strong in knowledge or faith, be thus minded. The Author to the Hebr. 5. 14. saith, *Strong meate belongeth to them that are of age.* The word is (*perfect*) his meaning is of some maturity, and ripeness in knowledge; and through long custome had their wits exercised to discern both good and evil: and therefore notwithstanding this, it remains a truth, that we may in this life proceede from one measure of faith and holiness to another, but wee can never come to an absolute perfection. The Anabaptists dreame of an absolute perfection of holiness in this life: but to passe by them, our duty following from hence is this: it behoves every one of us in this regard, never to set downe our rest in any grace, but ever to be striving forward, and to goe on from one measure of faith and grace to another: and to this purpose, we are to propound unto our selves, and to set before us the best examples for our imitation, as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 11. 1. *Be ye followers of me as I am of Christ:* This is that which deceives many of us: we looke downward, and compare our selves with such as are of meener gifts and graces than our selves: and we thinke all is well, because we are not as the worst, though we never strive to come neere the best. Happily some of us have a measure of knowledge, and wee rest in that knowledge, we know the Sacraments to be holy seales of Gods covenant of Grace, but wee have little or no care to use them. Wee know prayer to be excellent, but wee make no conscience to use it, onely for fashion publicquely, but very seldom privately with our families. This is to set downe our rest in knowledge, and not to strive to goe on: and let us take heed of it; if we find the love of the word and Sacraments, the liking of prayer, &c. that should be joynd to our knowledge, stolne out of our hearts, wee have cause to feare that sinne will deceive us, and creepe on to a further degree, even to the hardening of our hearts, that we shall not perceive it, and to the blinding of our mindes that we shall not see it. Wee may not thinke that *Sodom, Saul, Judas*, and such like, were at the height of their sinne at the first: but they went on by degrees, from one degree of sinne to another: and certainly, if wee goe not forward in grace we goe backward, and we grow in sinne, and going on in sinne, we shall come at length to be hardened, and to the height of sinne, and to pull downe the wrath of God upon us.

Let this therefore stirre us up, not to set downe our rest in any grace, but let us strive to goe on from knowledge to practice, and from one measure of grace to another.

Doct. 6.
The state of perfection is not proper to some sorts and orders of men.

Confutation of a Popish distinction touching perfection.

Note we one thing more in a word, in that the Apostle saith, present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, &c. wee may gather that the state of perfection is not proper to some sorts and orders of men, as the Papists teach, but every member of Christ is perfect, in respect of righteousness imputed in this life, and shall be perfect in regard of holiness inherent in the life to come.

But the Papists distinguish, and say, there be two kindes of perfection, a lesse, consisting in keeping the Law necessary to salvation: a greater, in observing the counsels of Christ, not simply necessary to salvation, but to obtaine a greater degree of glory: this distinction is most absurd.

For first, counsels be commandments; and againe, can there be a greater perfection, than the absolute fulfilling of the Law? it is not possible.

If any man be able to fulfill the Law of God, hee is most perfect, hee is in that respect perfect according to the example of Christ: therefore there can be no greater perfection, it is absurd to say, there can be greater perfection.

Verf. 29. *Whereunto I also labour and strive, according to his working which worketh in me mightily.*

IN this verse the Apostle setteth downe.

First, what hee did in respect of the end of his preaching before spoken of, (namely)

(namely) that he did labour and strive to attaine that end (*Wherunto I also labour and strive.*)

Secondly, by what power he so laboured, not by his owne, but by the working power of Christ (*according to his working.*)

Then followeth the subject of that working power wherein it wrought, and was effectuall (namely) himselfe (*which worketh in me.*)

To which is added the measure, how much it wrought in him, In the last word (*mighily*)

Wherunto (that is) unto which thing formerly spoken of, *I also* (that is) I for my part (labour and strive) the words are (labour striving) the meaning is, to which end I contend, not onely with labour and paines serving to that purpose, and tending to that end, but with wrestling and striving against all adversary power that doth oppose against it, to hinder the attainment of that end. Thus then the first words are to be conceived. Vnto which thing I for my part endeavour and contend, not onely labouring and doing such things as tend to that purpose, but striving against all things that oppose it, and hinder the attainment of that end.

Now here we are to marke, that the Apostle saith not, that hee barely propounded this as the end of his preaching and admonishing, that hee might present every man perfect in Christ Iesus: but hee did labour and strive to attaine it: hence we may take this generall conclusion.

That every man in his personall and particular calling, wherein hee is set for the glory of God, and the good of men, is to doe the duties of his calling with diligence, he is not onely to doe the duties appertaining to his place, after the example of the Apostle, but to doe them with labour and paine, breaking through all difficulties, and all things that stand up against him, to hinder him in the diligent performance of them, Eccles. 9. 10. The preacher saith, *all that thine hand shall finde to doe, doe it with all thy power*: not onely doe it, but doe it with all thy power: as if he had said, follow the workes of thy vocation, and employ all the powers of the minde, about the discharging of it faithfully, Paul bids him that ruleth, not onely to rule, but with diligence, and every man that hath an office or calling, to wait on it with care and diligence, Rom. 12. 7. 8. the reasons of this duty are two.

First, because it is appointed to man by Gods order, laid on him presently after the fall, that he should not onely labour and travell, but with paines. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eate bread, till thou returne to the earth, that is, till thy death, Gen. 3. 19.

Secondly, because the Lord hath given unto man both a body and a minde, that both these might be used and employed in the workes of his calling, that he should doe them not onely with his body, for so doe brute beasts, the Oxe and the Ass; but man must doe the workes of his calling with his body, and with earnest intention of his minde, and so with care and diligence.

We see then the duty proved, and the reasons of it: but that we be not deceived in the practice of it, two rules must be remembred.

First, our diligence in doing the duties of our calling, must be with respect to the will and commandment of God: for diligence is required by his commandment, and we are to be diligent in performing the duties of our callings, in conscience and obedience to Gods will and commandment, not for pride, covetousnesse, or upon compulsion, or other by-respects: such as doe the duties of their callings in these respects painfully, may be said to be great workers, but nothing diligent.

Secondly, our diligence must be with direction of our labours to the end of our callings, in the diligent performance of our duties, wee must drive at the end of our personall callings, that wee may attaine that end. The example of our Apostle

2

3

4

Interpretation.

Doct. 1.

Every man is to doe the duties of his particular calling with diligence.

Reason 2.

1

3

2 Rules.

Apostle in this place doth teach this much: he was called to preach the Gospel, that hee might present some perfect in Christ Jesus, and to that end did he employ his whole strength and endeavour; so must we in our particular places and callings: for example, a Master of a Family, he that is called to be a Master and governour over others, must not only in a family be diligent, in governing his wife, children, and servants, for that may be done for his owne profit and commodity, which (indeed) is not unlawfull, a man may reape the fruit of the labours of those that be under him, Psal. 127. 2. but that must not be the scope and drift of his diligent administration and government: but hee must therein direct at the preservation and good of the bodies and soules of those that be under him: that is the end of his particular calling. I might insist in other particulars, but by this we may see our duty, and the manner of the practise of it, wee must not onely doe the duties of our callings, but with care and diligence, and with diligence rightly ordered, (namely) with a respect to Gods will, and with direction of our labour, to the end of our personall callings.

Vse
We are to practise the duty of diligence in our callings.

A Motive.

1. Psal.

127. 2.

They are without the power thereof.

For the true practise of the duties of the first table of the Commandements, is seene, and doth appeare in the practise of the duties of the second table: our love to God appeares in our love to our brethren, and wee truly serve God, in doing service unto our brethren in the duties of our particular callings, as the Apostle doth shew, Chap. 3. of this Epistle, verse 24. in the example of servants, that servants in doing true service to their Masters, serve the Lord.

If a Master of a family, or his wife be ready and willing to heare the word, to receive the Sacraments, &c. and yet one of these be loose and retchlesse in the administration and government of his family, and the other carelesse in the practise of private obedience and subjection to her owne husband: surely they have but an outward forme and shew of religion, as the Apostle saith, 1 Tim. 3. 5. they are without the power thereof.

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If then we would avoyd the tedious and foule sinne of hypocrisie, which is hatefull to God and men, to whom it is knowne, and hath the portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. Let us be stirred up to doe the duties of our particular callings with diligence, even in conscience to the commandements of God, ever aiming at the end of our callings, that so wee may save our owne soules, and testifie to the world, that our hearts are upright and sincere in the feare and service of God.

The next thing wee are to marke from these words, is this, the Apostle takes to himselfe labour, and striving to winne soules to present them perfect in Christ Jesus, but no more, not the effecting or bringing of that to passe.

Hence we are taught, that knowne conclusion, that the Ministers of the Gospel may labour and strive to win soules to God, but they can go no further, they cannot effect it, 1 Cor. 3. 6. Paul may plant, Apollos may water, but God giveth the encrease. And the reason of this is that which is common to all callings, the fruit of mens labour in ther calling is, from the blessing of the Lord, Except the Lord build the house they labor in vaine that build it, Psal. 127. 1. so except the Lord give a blessing to the ministry of the Word, Ministers labor & strive but in vaine.

And

Dott. 5.

Ministers of the Gospel can onely labour and strive to win soules to God, but they cannot effect it.

Reason.

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And this point being fore-knownne, It may arme and strengthen the Minister against discomfort, that might follow upon it, when he shall labour and strive to winne men to God, and see little fruit of his labours; yea, the fruit of the selfe same word by him delivered to one and the same people; so diuers, that some regard it and doe thereafter; others neglect it and doe contrary: *Moses* himselfe had experience of this, *Exod. 9. 20. 21.*

Againe, is it so, that the Minister may labour & strive to bring men to God in vaine, unlesse it please God to give a blessing to his labours? then let us take heed there be no just cause in us why the Lord should with-hold his blessing from us in the ministry of the Word, and in his just judgement give us over to the blindness of our minds, and hardness of our hearts, that we can neither see, feelee, nor understand to saluation: and that is when we have not a love to the Word, but are hypocrites, and such as heare only for fashion, and of custome, and have not a longing desire to profit: such as come on this sort to the hearing of the Word, the Lord doth not blesse their hearing, but doth suffer them to goe on in a most fearefull dulnesse. Examples of this there be many in the world, and (no doubt) wee may easily point out some, who have heard their owne particular sinne discovered by the ministry of the Word, and that sinne spoken against, and the greatnesse and danger of it laid before them, and yet they are bold to continue in that sinne, and to goe on in it, and what is the cause of this? surely, because they heard only of fashion and custome, the Lord did not blesse their hearing. It is just with the Lord, as the Apostle hath taught, *2 Thes. 2. 10. 11, 12.* When men receive not the truth in love of the truth, to send them strong delusions that they should beleeeue lies, and so give them over to the blindness of their mindes, and hardness of their hearts. Let this therefore be thought on, and let it stirre us up to come to the hearing of the Word, with love to the Word, and a desire to profit by it, that so the Lord in mercy may strike an holy stroke within us by his powerfull Spirit, that we may be bettered by it.

Come we to speake of the power by which the Apostle did labour and strive, laid downe in these words [*according to his working*] the meaning is, according to the working power of Iesus Christ. For wee finde both these conjoynd, *Ephes. 3. 7.* the Apostle saith, he was made a Minister, by the gift of the grace of God given unto him, through the working of his power, where wee see working, and power joyned together.

For better clearing of these words, know, that the power of God is either absolute, by which he is able to do more than he will; or it is actuall, by which he doth that hee will. And this actuall power wee are to understand in this place, and so the meaning is, according to the working, or actuall, or effectuall power of Iesus Christ. The point of instruction hence to be gathered, is this.

In that the Apostle saith, hee did labour and strive in his Ministry, according to the working power of Christ: thence wee are taught this generall conclusion:

That the power to labour and take paines, not onely in the ministry, but in any place or calling, in any trade of life, it is from the actuall working power of the Lord: yea, wisdom and skill to worke in manuary trades is not naturall, nor gotten by paines, though paines (sanctified and blessed) are meanes to attaine it; yet they are but meanes, and the fountaine of that cunning and skill, is the working power of the Lord, *Exod. 31. 3, 4.* Wee have a plaine prooffe of this, the Lord saith, hee had filled *Bezaleel* with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all workmanship; and not onely that cunning and skill as the first gift, but we are further to marke, that all encrease and going forward in the same skill was from him. The Lord saith, it was of him, and from him, that *Bezaleel* should be able to find out curious workes,

T

to

Vse. 1.

Strength against discomfort, when a Minister sees little fruit of his labours.

Vse 2.

We must take heed the cause be not in our selves, that we find not Gods blessing on the ministry of his Word.

Interpretation.

Doll. 3.

Power to labour and to take paines in any calling, is from the actuall power of God.

to worke in gold, and silver, and in brasse, that is, to devise more and more every day, Prov. 26:12. The Wiseman saith, *The Lord hath made both these, to make the ear to heare, and the eye to see.* Which words not onely prove that the power to doe any duty, is from the Lord: but they containe the ground of it, and the meaning of them is thus much; that the Lord hath not onely formed all the parts of mens bodies, and namely these two, the ear, and the eye; but hee is who enableth and quickeneth them to their severall office and function as hee saith to Moses, Exod. 4:11. hee hath given the mouth and speech to man: therefore all power to labour in any place or calling, is from the actuall working power of the Lord.

I doubt not but this is a knowne and confessed truth; let us therefore make some profitable use of it.

And first it may reach publike persons, Magistrates and Ministers, not to looke at themselves, at their owne power, or rather at their owne weaknesse, but with comfort to looke to the power of the Lord in the discharge of their duties; it is an ingrafted weaknesse in mans nature, when any great or difficult thing is to be taken in hand, to be feareing and doubting, and ever casting perils and dangers. Thus was it with *Iudas*, *Jeremy* and *Moses*, and many others.

Men are indeede to consider their owne weaknesse, to humble them withall, but yet being called to performe any publike duty, they are then to remember, though they be weake, yet the Lord hee is strong, and ever able to strengthen them: and for their comfort, they are to remember that sweet promise of the Lord to *Moses*, upon acknowledgement of his owne weaknesse, Exod. 3:12. *I will be with thee*: as if he had said, I doe not say that I will helpe thee now and then; but I will be with thee, ever and continually; I will aide thee in this worke, even I, and not any Angell of mine, but I my selfe, and therefore feare not.

This is a notable encouragement to publike persons in the doing of their duties.

Againe, is it so, that power to labour in any trade or calling is from the working power of the Lord? wee must then learne to acknowledge it to come from the Lord, that we have strength or skill to labour in our callings, and that our acknowledgement of it, be not verball, onely in word, and of course, but that our owne hearts may witnesse with us, wee doe in truth acknowledge it, wee must often send up prayers to Heaven for strength to labour, yea, in the middest of our greatest ability: for wee have neede of continuall supply of strength, as the light of a lampe hath need of oyle to maintaine it: and when wee have strength given, wee are to be thankfull to God for it, using both it and the fruit of our strength and labours to the glory of God, and the good of our selves and others.

Many men are defective in this duty, they never acknowledge the power they have to labour, to be from the Lord, haply in word they doe: if the question be made to themselves, whether they doe acknowledge their strength to labour to come to the Lord or no; they will answer, certainly they doe, but indeed and truth they doe not: for finding themselves lusty and strong to worke and to take paines, they presume upon their strength, and seldome or never call upon God for a blessing upon it, and for continuall supply of strength, and the Lord notwithstanding suffering them to enjoy the fruit of their strength and labours, hee being wonderfull in goodnesse, they seldome or never open their mouthes to give thanks to the Lord: no, they commonly ascribe the fruit of their labours to their owne strength; as they Prophet *Habakkuk* 1: 16. saith of the wicked of his time, they sacrifice to their owne net, and that they get by their labours, they abuse and spend riotously and wastfully, as fast as it comes in; the Lord therefore hath lately pinched such unthankfull unthrifs,

Use 1.
Publike persons are not to looke at their owne power, but to the power of the Lord in discharge of their duties.

Use 2.
We must acknowledge our strength and skill to labour in our callings, to come from the Lord.

unthrifts, he being Lord of all creatures, he hath by the late hard weather, by the extreame frost, bound up their hands, that they could not worke, and so hath fet it before them (if they will not wilfully shut their eyes) they may see whence they have power to labour: I know the devill (the teacher of all the ungodly) will bee ready to suggest, that this binding of mens hands by the weather was common to all both good and bad. It is true; but I make no doubt of it, but that such as truly feare the Lord, found that of the Psalmist true, Psalme. 33. 18. 19. that *the eye of the Lord was upon them, to deliver their soules from death, and to preserve them in famine*: or if they were pinched with others, yet it was in mercy not in iudgement, and onely ungodly unthrifts, such as never acknowledge their strength to labour, to come from the Lord, they felt smart and were pinched in iudgement, and forced to mutter and murmur, and to fall to ungodly courses.

Let this then teach us ever to acknowledge the strength we have to labour to come from the Lord, doubtlesse we may observe it, when men doe not acknowledge God the author of their strength, the Lord in his iust iudgement strikes them with sicknesse, blindnesse, lamenesse, some way or other disabling them; he will be honoured in all his gifts, either by acknowledgement of them, or by the confusion of such as will not thankfully acknowledge them.

Let us then learne to acknowledge what power or skill soever we have in our trades and callings, that it is given of God, that so wee may use it to his glory, and to the good of our selves and others, and finde his blessing upon it; without which, our best strength turnes to weaknesse.

Come we to the subiect of the working power of Christ, namely, the Apostle himselfe [*which worketh, or is effectual in me*] that wee are to marke from these words, is this.

The Apostle saith not, the power of Christ wrought and was effectually with him, but in him, or (as some expound the words) by him: whence it followeth:

That neither the Apostle was, nor any Minister of the word now is, a co-worker, a fellow-worker with the power of God, as adding any power to his power, in the winning of soules, but only is as an instrument in the hand of so powerfull a workeman; the actuall power of God doth worke in and by his Ministers by gaining of soules to himselfe. Hence it is that the Apostle saith, 2 Cor. chap. 13. verf. 3. that *Christ did speake of him*, not with him, seeing that ye seeke experience of Christ, that speaketh in me, which towards you is not weake, but is mighty in you: hee takes not so much as speech or power to speake, of himselfe, but ascribes it altogether unto Christ: when therefore we see grace and holinesse conveyed into mens hearts by the ministry of the Word and Sacraments; we must learne not to ascribe it to any working power of the Minister, and elements, but wholly to the supreme power of Almighty God.

But may some say, doth not the Apostle, 1 Cor. 15. 10. say hee laboured, and yet not he, but the grace of God which was with him: doth not hee then as firme a power in himselfe, and of himselfe, and the grace of God to worke with him? Indeed the Papists they abuse that place, and would force it to prove a concurring of Free-will, with Gods grace in our conversion.

But that is cleane from the purpose of the Apostle, as may appeare by the context: for hee there speakes onely of his labours that he sustained in preaching the Gospell: but to satisfie such as make this objection, wee are to marke, the Apostle saith not, the grace of God which laboureth with me: as if partly he, and partly the grace of God had laboured; but, which is with me: as if he had said, I laboured more then they all, and then by way of correction, hee calls himselfe backe, yet what said I? I, no nor I, but altogether the grace of God which is present with me in the preaching of the Gospell: thus we are to under-

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3 The sub-
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Deff. 4.
Neither Apo-
stle, nor any
Minister of the
Word, is a co-
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soules.

Vse.
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Objection.

Ans.

4 The mea-
sure.

Doct. 5.
The Lord
worketh might-
ily by weake
means of
grace.

Use
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derstand the words of the Apostle. The Papist in their translation cunningly leave out the Article which is in the original, and so corrupt the text, and abuse their followers.

Now the Apostle in the last words addeth the measure of Christ his working in him, that the power of Christ wrought in him (mightily) as indeed it did: you may see it, if you read, Rom. 15. 18. 19. We are taught not to looke at the outward man in the ministry of the word, or the outward elements in the Sacraments; for the ministry of the Word is exercised by weake and morall men, and the outward elements, bread, wine, and water are weake and common dead creatures in themselves, yet the Lord worketh mightily by them.

The use of this in a word is thus much: we therefore are to know that Gods favour and grace is ever ready to bee found, when it is faithfully sought in the use of the Word and Sacraments: our faith can never take the Lord caddy, in giving grace by his holy ordinances, the ministry of the Word and Sacraments he worketh in them, and by them mightily; his power is ever present in the right use of them. The messengers in the Gospell, Luke 14. 17. say not to them that were bidden, bee there at such a time, and in the meane while such things shall be made ready: or goe with me now, and supper will be ready anon; but come, for all things are ready; grace is now ready, and now prepared for them that seeke it in the right use of the Words and Sacraments, and if wee have failed to obtaine grace and comfort by the Word and Sacraments, wee are to im-
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THE SECOND CHAPTER

CHAP. II. VER. 1.

For I would ye knew what great fighting I have for your sakes, and for them of Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my person in the flesh.



THE Apostle in the former Chapter, having declared the doctrine delivered to the Colossians to be agreeable to the truth, and perswaded to continuance in the same. In this second Chapter he doth shew them, that they ought carefully to avoyd all other corrupt doctrines whatsoever, whereby false teachers would obtrude and thrust upon them any thing besides Christ, or any thing with Christ, as meanes of salvation, whether out of Philosophy, or the Law of *Moses*. That is the generall proposition and matter

that is handled in this Chapter. The parts of it are three.

First, an *Exordium*, an entrance depending upon that which went before in the first and second verses. Then two generall propositions. First, that in Christ we have full and perfect knowledge needfull to salvation, and that in the third verse. Secondly that all other things are mere deceit and vanity, *verf. 4.* And both these are amplified by many arguments and particulars, perswading to embrace the one, and to avoid the other, and intermingled through the chapter: we shall best see them in the passage and particular handling of the Chapter.

Come we to the words of the first verse, [*For I would, &c.*] These words look backe to the last verse of the former Chapter, as a preoccupation or prevention of an objection. The Colossians might say, *Paul*, thou dost labour and strive much in preaching the Gospell; but what is that to us? thou never sawest us, nor we thee, all thy labour and paines is nothing to us: this objection the Apostle meetes withall, when he saith, *I would ye knew what great fighting I have for your sakes, &c.* Here we have, first, the Apostles desire that his labour and fighting might be knowne, in the first words, *For I would ye knew what great fighting I have, &c.* Secondly, for whom it was in particular, namely, for the Colossians, and them of Laodicea. Thirdly, and then generally, *for as many as have not seen my person in the flesh.*

For I would ye knew what great fighting I have] onely the word *fighting* is to be cleared and explained: It is metaphoricall, borrowed from such as withstand assault or open violence and hostility: such as with all their strength see themselves against the power and violence of open enemies. Fighting doth imply opposition, and the Apostle doth thereby signifie his spirituall striving, his earnest care and paines hee tooke to withstand the enemies of the Church, Satan and his instruments, and that by his sufferings whereof he spake, chap. 1. 24. And by his earnest prayers, as he saith, chap. 4. 12. *Epaphras* did strive in prayers for the

The generall proposition and matter of this chapter.

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that is handled in this Chapter. The parts of it are three.

First, an *Exordium*, an entrance depending upon that which went before in the first and second verses. Then two generall propositions. First, that in Christ we have full and perfect knowledge needfull to salvation, and that in the third verse. Secondly that all other things are meere deceit and vanity, vers. 4. And both these are amplified by many arguments and particulars, perswading to embrace the one, and to avoid the other, and intermingled through the chapter: we shall best see them in the passage and particular handling of the Chapter.

Come we to the words of the first verse, [*For I would, &c.*] These words look backe to the last verse of the former Chapter, as a preoccupation or prevention of an objection. The Colossians might say, *Paul*, thou dost labour and strive much in preaching the Gospel; but what is that to us? thou never sawest us, nor we thee, all thy labour and paines is nothing to us: this objection the Apostle meetes withall, when he saith, *I would ye knew what great fighting I have for your sakes, &c.* Here we have, first, the Apostles desire that his labour and fighting might be knowne, in the first words, *For I would ye knew what great fighting I have, &c.* Secondly, for whom it was in particular, namely, for the Colossians, and them of Laodicea. Thirdly, and then generally, *for as many as have not seen my person in the flesh.*

For I would ye knew what great fighting I have] onely the word fighting is to be cleared and explained: It is metaphorical, borrowed from such as withstand assault or open violence and hostility: such as with all their strength set themselves against the power and violence of open enemies. Fighting doth imply opposition, and the Apostle doth thereby signifie his spirituall striving, his earnest care and paines hee tooke to withstand the enemies of the Church, Satan and his instruments, and that by his sufferings whereof he spake, chap. 1. 24. And by his earnest prayers, as he saith, chap. 4. 12. *Epaphras* did strive in prayers for the

The generall proposition and matter of this chapter.

The parts of this chapter three.

the Colossians, by his writings and reasonings, in way of confutation of all adversaries of the truth; so much is implied in the word *fighting*. Thus then wee are to conceive the meaning of the Apostle.

I would ye knew what care and paines I take for you in withstanding Satan, and the enemies of the truth, and of your salvation, by my sufferings, prayers, writings, and reasonings against them.

The first thing here to bee observed, is this: the Apostle was not content to have an earnest care and contention, for the good of the Colossians, and other Churches, but hee made it knowne to them, *I would ye knew it*, saith the Apostle, hee thought it no shame to tell them that hee loved them, and had an earnest care and striving for their good: the conclusion following hence is this.

Doct. 1.
It is lawfull to make knowne and to speake of our Christian love to others.

It is lawfull to make knowne and to speake of our Christian love to others.

Reason.

It is lawfull to make knowne and to speake of our Christian love to others.

Use
Things to be avoided in speaking of our love to others.

Note.

It is lawfull to make knowne, and to speake of our Christian love to others, and of our care for their good; a man may lawfully speake of it, and make it knowne that he hath a love, and Christian care for the good of others, if so bee in speaking of it hee let before him the glory of God, and the good of men, as (no doubt) but the Apostle did in this place; and we may observe it to bee very frequent and usuall with the Apostle, to speake of his love and care for the good of Gods Church; when hee knew the speaking of it might redound to Gods glory, and the good of his people, 2 Cor. 12. 15. he saith, hee ought to have beene commended of them; for in nothing was he inferior unto the very chiefe Apostles, &c. hee makes knowne that hee had an exceeding love and care for the good of that Church. Thus we may doe, we may speake of our love and care over others, that God may thereby be glorified, and our brethren benefited, being thereby stirred vp to answer our love againe, and to praise God for it: and there is reason for this, because every grace and good gift (as love, and care for the good of others, and the like) is a portion of Gods name: therein appeares the power, vertue and goodnesse of God, in working that love and care in the hearts of men. Therefore it not onely may, but ought to be published and made knowne to this end, that God therein may bee honoured: and if wee ought (as it is our duty) as occasion is offered, to speake of the beauty, sweetness, colour and brightnesse that is found in the creatures, that glory may redound to God the giver of those things: much more when occasion is offered, (that thereby God may be glorified) ought we to speake of our love to others, and of our care for their good, those things being more excellent in themselves, and given for better use and purpose. I shall not need to urge this point, for the matter of it, every man (no doubt) is ready to blaze, and to set abroad, and to amplify that love he beares to others, and that care he hath for their good: yea some deale in this respect, as *Abshalom* did, 2 Sam. 15. 4. they speake of love and care towards others, that is not in them, as if they loved them exceedingly, and cared much for their good, thereby to insinuate and get within the love and liking of others, and to get the good word of others. These boasters are reckoned up by the Apostle in the rancke and rabble of reprobates, Rom. 1. 30. or else if there bee in them a care of the good of others: they speake of it as the Pharisee speakes of his fasting, and giving of riches. Luke 18. 11. with disparagement and with disgrace of others: that if they were in such a place, or in such an office, they would have men to know, that they would deale better than others doe, and so they cunningly seeke their owne praise by other mens disgrace, which is a grosse corruption, and a breach of the ninth commandement: Wee may lawfully speake of our love and care over others, so as therein we seek not our owne praise but the glory of God. If praise be given of God, and godly men, we may lawfully accept it; the Lord hath promised to crowne with honour, and estimation among men, them that honour him, 1 Sam. 2. 30. Therefore it is not to be declined: the true children of God may accept praise given, yea honour and dignity in the world, so their mindes be humbled, and they have learned Saint Pauls lesson,

lesson, 2 Corinth: 6. 8. to use a right honour and dishonour: but they are not to seeke it by speaking of the good things that be in them, for so doing they seeke to set themselves above the Lord, and to ascend above the height of the clouds, Isai. 14. 14. and to advance their glory above the glory of the Lord, which ought to be sought above the salvation of their owne soules.

The next thing to be marked, is, that the Apostle saith not, know that I have a great fighting for you, &c. But I would have you to know, it is my desire that you should know it, and his desire being holy and good, doth afford this point of instruction.

That it is good for men to know, and to acknowledge the love and care that others (especially Ministers and publike persons) have over them, and for them: if there be a care in the Ministers of the Gospell to doe us good, and that manifested by many meanes, by preaching, writing, praying, admonition, or any other way, it is good for us to take notice of it and to acknowledge it. Our Saviour saith by way of pittifull complaint over Ierusalem, Luke 19. 42. *If thou haddest even knowne, at the least in this thy day, those things which belong unto thy peace: as if hee had said, In pity and compassion towards thee, I wish thou haddest knowne these things that concerne thy peace, spoken unto thee by the Prophets in former times, or at least the things offered by mee in this thy day, concerning thy peace: but alas, thou wouldest not take knowledge of them: therefore now they are hid from thine eyes. See againe how the Lord doth complaine of his people, Ezechiel 12. 9. Sonne of man (saith hee) hath not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said unto thee, What doest thou? as if hee should have said, How stupid and how senselesse is this people, that yet will not acknowledge thy care to instruct them by this manifest similitude (for the Lord had bidden the Prophet, verse 3. to prepare his staffe to goe into captivity, and said, Go forth by day in their sight: and thou shalt passe from thy place to another place in their sight, if it were possible that they might consider with the Prophet how they might escape the captivity threatned.) yet when the Prophet had so done, they considered not his care to instruct them, but stood as men amazed, and said, What doest thou? and of this doth the Lord complaine: therefore it is good to know, to acknowledge, and to consider the love, and care that others, and especially the Ministers of the Gospell have over us for our good: and there is reason for it, it is a meanes to give way and entrance to the speach of such as speake unto us, or doe any thing for our good, to make their good workes and actions acceptable and profitable unto us: when wee know and acknowledge them to bee words and deeds, not of course but of conscience proceeding of love and care towards us, it will make us so to esteeme of them, and make profit by them. A lesson indeed that is not well learned of many in the world: some there be, that when they are iustly reprov- ed for their sinnes, as usury, extortion and such like, and that in a tender care over them for their good, as so farr from acknowledging that reproofe to come from any love towards them, as they begin to quarrell with the affections of the reprover, and sticke not to mutter it in corners, that they are hardly dealt withall, and unreasonably reprov- ed: yea sometimes they seeke by recriminati- on, and by uniuert accusation, to blemish them that would wipe away their foule blots.*

And thus they shew themselves such as the wise man speakes of, Proverbs 9. verf. 7. *Hee that rebuketh the wicked, getteth himselfe a blot:* others againe are like to Lots sonnes in law, Genesis 19. 14. who (as there we reade) when Lot spake to them to get them out of Sodome, in care over them for their good, he seemed to them as though he had mocked: so some when they are told of their sinnes, and withall shewed that iudgement hangs over their heads for the same, they think men that doe so tell them do but dreame, and are troubled with some melan-

Ded. 2.

It is good for men to know and acknow- ledge that love and care that publike per- sons have over them, and for them.

Reason.

Vse.

Reproofe of them that will not take notice of the tender care of their Ministers over them, when out of love they iustly reprove them.

melancholike passions, and it is neither so nor so. Well, let such as will not now acknowledge the love and care of them that labour to doe them good by reproving them for their finnes, or shewing the iudgements of God due to their finnes, know, that the Lord by his mighty working, will so bring it to passe, that in their extremities they shall be forced to acknowledge it: then they shall iustifie the love of such as did formerly reprove them, and then they shall wish for their prayers as *Pharaoh* did for the prayers of *Moses* and *Aaron*, when the hand of God was upon him, *Exodus* 8. 8. And as the stubborne *Israelites* did the prayer of *Samuel*, whom not long before they neglected, *1 Sam.* 12. 19. yea wicked *Ieroboam* in case of extremity sends to the Prophet, whose doctrine hee would not follow, and no worse messenger than his owne wife, *1 King.* 14. 2. and may we not observe it that many who (at other times) regard not what the Ministers of the Gospell say unto them in tender care for their good, yet in time of extremity are forced by the omnipotent hand of God, to send and to seeke unto them for comfort, and then many times in the iust iudgement of God they are left in their misery, and are not able to take hold of any comfort that is ministred, the Lord having so threatned, *Prou.* 1. 26. that hee will laugh at their destruction: meaning that he in the course of his providence will leave them in their miseries, and make them a mocking stocke to the world; doth not daily and lamentable experience teach thus much? Let it then stirre us up to take notice and to acknowledge the love and care of such as labour amongst us for our good, bee it but in poore and weake measure, and in testimony of our true acknowledgement of it, let us labour to take profit by it: for it is not enough to cry out with the woman in the Gospell, *Luke* 11. 27. *Blessed is the wombe that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked:* to commend the gracious words, the person or the gifts of love, care, or zeale that is found in them that seeke our good: no, no, saith our Saviour, *Blessed are they that heare these words and doe them.* The heathen man could say, *Lauda ut videam*, Praise me that I may see it, that is the best acknowledgement of any grace in other men manifested, serving for our good, to give testimony that we like it, and that is the testimony of our liking of it, if we be bettered by it.

The next thing to be marked in the Apostles desire expressed in these words, is, that hee doth expresse his care and paines hee tooke under the word (*fighting*) a word that doth imply opposition, and in this place doth signifie a spirituall withstanding of violence offered by the enemies of the truth, the Apostle expressing a speciall part of his care and paines under the notion of (*fighting*) doth give us understand thus much for our instruction.

That the truth of the Gospell hath ever had some to withstand it: no sooner was the true doctrine of the Gospell published by the Apostles of Christ, and the true teachers of it, but false Apostles, deceivers and teachers of error presently start up in opposition and contradiction to it, and so the Apostles were put to a second and double labour, to teach the truth, and so withstand error springing up after the truth: like the builders of the walles of *Ierusalem*, *Nehemiah* 4. verse 17. who builded with one hand, and with the other held the sword. It was the occasion of the writing of this Epistle, and of that, to the *Galathians*, that upon the preaching of the truth, and planting of the Gospell among them, they were in danger to be seduced by false teachers. Examples of this kinde are infinite, and Ecclesiasticall histories of all times and ages, are full fraught with such examples: we read in the booke of God, that together with the doctrine of piety and religion, there sprung up the doctrine of the *Nicholaitanes*, of *Balaam*, of *Isabel*, and of those abominable and cursed men that crept into the Church, whom *Peter* and *Jude* doe point out in their Epistles, and warne men to take heed of them and divers others: there were men in the Church of *Corinth* thrust out by *Satan*, that tooke upon them to defend

feasting

Doct. 3.
The truth of
the Gospell
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feasting with Idolaters in Idols Temples, with meates offered to Idols, and by their subtil cauilling wits, helped forward by the Devill, tooke on them to prone that they were not defiled by eating those meates or by bodily fornication: in whose stead after the Apostles times succeeded the Valentinians and other heretikes. Yea, come we to our owne times, wee shall finde that so soone as euer the light of the Gospell shined and dispelled the darknesse of Poperie, the diuell set on foote manie dangerous errors by Anabaptists, Libertines, the Family of loue, and other such monsters.

And the reason is that which wee finde, Ioh. 8, verf. 44. because the diuell himselfe abode not in the truth, that is, as some learned Orthodoxall expound it, not in the truth of the eternall and euermlasting Gospell of Christ, made knowne vnto the Angels from the beginning of the world, in that truth the Devill and the euill Angels would not rest, but chose rather to forsake their originall and first state, *Iude* verse 6, than they would subscribe and yeelde vnto it. Hence it is that the Devill hath in former times, and doth now, and euer shall to the end of the world, continually raise vp, and scatter a broad lying heresies against the Deitie, Humanitie and offices of Christ, against the truth, and substance of the Gospell, and labour what he can by his euill suggestions to seduce men, and to draw them from yeelding assent to the truth of the Gospell: yea in the end making them stand vp in opposition, and contradiction to it. we see this poynt proved, that the Gospels truth hath had, and alwaies shall haue some to withstand and contradict it.

Many at this day are offended, that errors and strange opinions spring vp together with the preaching of the Gospell, and take occasion thereby to slander and deface it: but let them know, that by this reason they might as well condemne the preaching of the Apostles: yea the Papists knew it well, that errors and heresies begun to sprout vp, and to shew themselves in the Apostles time, and that shortly after their times, the Church was euery where grievously rent and tormented by monstrous heretikes and filthy persons: yet they shame not to object it as a vile reproach against us, that such things doe spring up where the Gospell is preached. Indeed they consider not whom they reproch: for they reproch not onely us, but whole Churches of old, even Churches planted by the Apostles, and the Lord himselfe. Wee may not take it to bee no true Gospell, nor right preaching, nor no true Church where errors and oppositions arise, but rather acknowledge it to bee the same Gospell that was preached, by the Apostles, seeing Satan seekes to deface it as hee did in old time. If wee thinke the Devill bee still like himselfe, as indeed hee is no lesse malicious than hee hath beene, but hee laboureth more to sow errors and corrupt men, by how much hee is neerer to his end; why then should wee not looke for his working and practises against the truth to bee the same, or worse than they have beene in times past? Let the consideration of this arme us against offence, in regard of the damnable heresies, sects and schismes, which follow the sincere truth of the Gospell; let it strengthen us against discouragement, urged upon us by the blasphemous railing Papists, who charge the most heavenly doctrine of the Gospell to bee the seed of all heresies, errors, and tumults: for it is the devill that sowers all the ill seed, and then sets wicked men a worke, Papists and such like, to exclaime against the Gospell, as if the fault were in the doctrine of the Gospell. This is the subtilty and packing of the devill, and this being discovered unto us, let us bee strengthened against all discouragements, that the enemies of the truth are able to enforce by this argument, that errors, oppositions, and differences doe spring up where the Gospell is preached, *1 COL. 11. 19. There must be heresies even among you, that they which are approved among you, might be knowne.*

Come we now to speak of the words following, wherein the Apostle sets down for

Reason.

Vse.

We are not to be offended that errors and strange opinions spring up together with the preaching of the Gospell.

for whom his labour and fighting was (namely) in particular for the Colossians, and for them of Laodicea, and generally for as many as had not seene him. Now then, in that the Apostle saith, he had great labour and fighting, a great care to withstand the enemies of the truth by his sufferings, prayers, writings, and reasonings against them, and that for the good of the Colossians, Laodiceans, and others, I might shew that the sufferings of the godly are profitable for others: but of that we spake, verse 24. 1. chap. and againe, that the writings of the Apostles are very profitable for others, daily experience sheweth.

But the point I will stand on, is this, that the prayers of the godly are profitable for others, and that in this particular respect, they are notable meanes of defence to shield them against the violence of their spiritual enemies, who set upon their soules to corrupt them with error, and to bring them into heresie.

Touching the efficacy of prayer in generall, that place of *James* is very plaine and pregnant, *James* 5. 16. *that the prayer of the righteous man availeth much, if it be fervent*: but for prooffe of this, that the prayer of the faithfull is a powerfull meanes to defend others from being overcome by the assaults of the enemies of their salvation; reade *Ephesians* 6. 18. we may there obserue that the Apostle doth reckon prayer as a speciall part of the compleate armour of a Christian, whereby he may not onely defend himselfe, and repell the assaults of particular enemies, but he may profitably use it for the defence of others, even the Saints of God, and fellow members of the same body. Pray alwaies for all Saints (saith the Apostle) as if hee had said, doe not use prayer as an excellent weapon for defence of your selves onely, against your spirituall enemies, but for the defence of others also, even the Saints of God. If wee looke into the world, we shall finde examples of many that have received profit by the prayers of the godly in this kinde: they have beene kept from quite falling from God in time of a dangerous conflict with Satan, and in the Lords good time they have beene delivered: but that there be no mistaking of this point: know that wee are not to ascribe this fruit of prayer to the dignity of prayer, or to any worthinesse to the faithfull, but onely to the bottomelesse mercy and goodnesse of the Lord: he of his infinite goodnesse making them so powerfull, and so mighty with himselfe, as that they are to him as it were bands to tye him, and as a wall against him, that hee cannot sometimes execute his iudgements on the wicked, unlesse they (as it were) suffer him, and stand out of his way: and thus we reade of his mercy to *Moses* *Exodus* 32. 10. *Let me alone (saith the Lord) that my wrath may wax hot against them.* Is there any thing at all in man to deserve this? no, no surely; it is the Lords meere mercy to such as it pleaseth him to receive into his love, and imbrace in his mercy.

And for the use of this, it is an exceeding great comfort to the children of God, such of them as are weake, and haply conflicting with Satan, and under some grievous temptation, and so not able to pray as they ought, or desire, they are to comfort themselves in this, that though their prayers be in much weakenesse, yet they may have the benefit of the prayers of the godly, which are mighty, and prevaile much with the Lord: but let none take hold of this comfort, but such as are indeed the children of God, and remember with this, that they that will be prayed for with comfort of their soules, must be able at one time or other, though haply not for the present, being under some grievous affliction, yet I say at one time or other to pray for themselves though in much weakenesse. *Deuteronomy* 33. 7. it is said thus, *Moses blessed Judah, and said, heare O Lord the voyce of Judah.* Hee prayes for *Judah*, who was able to send up his voyce to God for himselfe; they that neither are, nor ever were able to pray for themselves, but in time of neede put themselves onely on other mens prayers, they are like the foolish Virgins, *Matthew*

Doll. 4.
The prayers of the faithful are profitable in respect of others, against the violence of their spirituall enemies.

Note.

Use
Comfort to Gods children being weake, & conflicting with Satan, & under some grievous temptation, that they have the benefit of the prayers of the godly.

Note.

thew 25. who goe to borrow oyle, when they have most neede to borrow it, not but the godly may pray for all sorts of men grounding on Gods generall commandement, binding them to show duties of love and mercy to all sorts, be they godly or wicked, as *Abraham* prayed for the *Sodomites*, *Genesis* 18. 23. *Eli* for *Zacchar*, *Exodus* 19. 20. but yet onely such as are the children of God, have profit by the prayers of the godly, to defend them against the power of spirituall enemies, and to help them to eternall life. The wicked may have temporall calamities removed, as *Pharaoh* had at the prayer of *Moses* and *Aaron*, and *Trocham* his withered hand restored at the prayer of the *Prophet*, *1 Kings* 1. 6. but wicked reprobates cannot have any spirituall comfort by the prayers of the godly, and therefore let this comfort and cheere up onely the children of God in their weakenesse, that though they pray in much weakenesse, yet the prayers of the faithfull are strong for them, and they holding communion with the Saints, they have part in all the good prayers of the people of God, throughout the whole world, and if the Lord heare the prayer of one faithfull man, or of two or three gathered together in his name according to his promise: of what force then may wee thinke are the prayers of thousands, yea, ten thousand thousands, even of all Churches of the chosen children of God throughout the world? How shall not the Lord in mercy according to his promise accomplish that which they aske? Surely, the Lord cannot but heare them calling upon him: let this then raise up the hearts of the children of God, and make them in troubles lift up their heads with comfort, and looke about them, they shall see as *Elisadid*, *2 Kings* 6. 16. more with them, than against them, they have Angels to guard them, all the Saints on the earth to pray for them, which is a singular comfort if it be duly considered.

One thing more is further to be observed from the last words of this verse (*And for as many as have not scene my person in the flesh*) I will not trouble you with any curious speculation, tending rather to superstition than to edification, touching the face of the Apostle. The words are thus to be conceived; for as many as have not scene my bodily presence before them, nor ever heard mee speaking unto them. Now in that the Apostle saith, hee had a great fighting in prayer for as many as had not scene his face: wee are taught.

That we must not onely strive, and be earnest in prayer for the good of our selves, and our familiars and friends, and such as are well knowne unto us: but with like earnest care and desire we are to pray for the good of all the members of *Jesus Christ*, wheresoever they be, though never scene of us, we must never pray for our selves or friends with a private heart and affection: but wee are to wish and pray for the like mercy to all the members of *Christ* that have like need: it is lawfull for us to pray for our selves and friends in particular, wee have the example of *David*, of *Anna*, and of our Saviour himselfe: but in prayer for our good, and the good of our friends, wee must have (as they doubtlesse had) an eye to the common good, that by that thing given, be it health, liberty, or the like, we may be better able to serve God, and to doe good to our selves and others, and withall wee are inwardly to wish the like good to all the members of *Christ*, to whom it may stand in like stead. This we are taught in the first words of that prayer left by *Christ* to his Church. The word (*our*) being a word of community doth teach us, that we should never pray for our selves alone, but together with our selves for all others, even the whole Church of God.

The reason of this is plaine: we are members of one and the same body, and the bond is so strict by which we are knit together, even one and the same spirit, that wee should feeble the griefes one of another, and beare the burdens one of another, *Heb.* 13. 3. remember one anothers bonds, saith the holy Ghost: but how? by speaking or talking of their bonds, by uttering some words of pitty and

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Doct. 5.
We must not only pray for our selves and our familiar friends, but for all the members of *Christ* wheresoever they be.

Reason.

Vt.
Reprooffe of
such as neglect
this duty.

and commiseration? no, not onely so, but by remembering them, as though wee our selves were bound with them: no doubt if wee were in prison and in bonds, we would besides other meanes, used pray for our owne deliverance, so are wee to remember in our prayers the bonds and imprisonment of others, and even heartily to pray for them, as we would for our selves: a duty that wee forget too often.

Wee will scarce pray for our neere neighbours that live daily amongst us, much lesse doe the miseries of many Saints of God in other places and Countries affect us: nay, I feare me, I may justly speake it, many seldome or never pray for their owne families, no childe, no servant, no not the wife of their owne bosome hath the helpe of their prayers, their houses are nurseries and seminaries of cursing and swearing, and all manner of disorder: it is just with the Lord to punish such with unruly wives, with gracelesse children, and lewd servants.

Let us then learne to pray for our selves and families, if wee looke for any blessing of God upon them: and in praying for our selves, let us remember the Saints in other places, our hearts are commonly narrow and straight, looking onely at our selves, and our owne friends, and the deare Saints of God, members with us of the same body are not thought upon, sinke or swimme the Church of God we care not for it, so wee be well: this is farre from that affection that ought to be in the members of Christ: and certainly, prayers made without care, and desire of the good of others, returne empty unto us without profit or comfort, yea without doubt, it is one cause why the Lord doth not blesse us in our callings and labours: the people of God say, Psal. 137. 5. *If I forget Ierusalem, then let my right hand forget to play.* The implication of that place is thus much unto us, that if wee forget the Church of God, and doe not remember the Saints of God in affliction, in that wherein wee may doe them most good, as (namely) in our prayers, the Lord may justly take from us our cunning, and blow upon our labours, and curse every thing wee take in hand. Let this stirre us up to thinke of others in Christian love, as of our selves, and to entreat the Lord for them as for our selves.

Verf. 2. That their hearts might be comforted, and they knit together in love, and in all riches of the full assurance of understanding to know the myserie of God, even the father, and of Christ.

Come we to the second verse, which is part of the Apostles *exordium* or entrance to his matter following. In this verse is first laid downe the end of the Apostles fighting for the good of the Colossians and others: and the end was this, that their hearts might be comforted.

Then followes two conditions of such as are capable of that cordiall comfort.

First, they are such as are knit together in love, for so are the words in the originall, that their hearts might be comforted, they being knit together in love.

Secondly, such as are knit together in all riches of the full assurance of understanding.

And to this is added by way of opposition an explication of that understanding, what it is (namely) a knowledge of the myserie of God, even the father, and of Christ: of these things let us speake in order.

That their hearts might be comforted. The word translated (*comforted*) doth properly signifie encouraged and raised up by some words of comfort, being ready otherwise to faint, or fall downe under some affliction or trouble. The Apostles meaning then in these words first is thus much, that their hearts fainting, and ready to faile in regard of trouble, and discouragement by false teachers, adversaries of the truth, might be encouraged and raised up with comfort.

The

The first thing here to be marked is, that the Apostle makes it a speciall end of his labouring and striving for the good of the Colossians and others, that their hearts might be comforted. Hence wee may gather, that one speciall end to be driven at in all ministeriall actions, *in preaching, in praying*, in writing and reasoning against adversaries of the truth, is, that mens hearts might be comforted, that such as belong to Christ may receive spirituall joy and comfort of heart. The Apostle saith, He that prophesieth speaketh unto men, to edifying, and to exhortation, and to comfort, 1 Cor. 14. 3. or rather (indeed) as the words are, to encouragement and comfort. Two principall ends of preaching are encouragement and comfort. The Gospel is the word of glad tidings and heavenly comfort; and the end of the preaching of it, is to bring Gods Elect to certaine hope of life and salvation: and as many as are begotten to that lively hope, they are also brought to rejoyce with ioy unspeakeable, 1 Pet. 1. 8. in so plaine a point, it is needlesse to adde further evidence, but for the use of it,

Is it so, that a speciall end of all ministeriall actions is, that mens hearts might be comforted? wickedly then deale Popish teachers, in turning their teaching to a cleane contrary end, even to hold men in suspence, and to make them live in continuall doubt of their salvation, and so voyd of all spirituall comfort: every man may see that that is a perverting of the ordinance of God, and a right profanation of the holy word of comfort; which being truly taught and directed to a right end, gives certaine light and knowledge of life and salvation, and is powerfull by the worke of the spirit to conferre the spirit of adoption, whereby beleivers know and are assured that they shall be saved, and that doth replenish their hearts with exceeding great and unspeakeable comfort.

And againe, for a second use of this point, it is a cavill and a reasoning of the flesh, helped forward by the subtilty of Satan, to say, that the diligent attending on the ministry of the word, is a meane to make men live an heaue, and a dum-pish, and uncomfortable life, and a meanes to strip and deprive them of all delight and comfort: yea, some are deeply posselt with a conceit, that it is a meanes to make men mad, and foolish people sometime have uttered it, where a Preacher hath bene sent among them, that hee would make them all goe out of their wits. See the cunning of the Divell to fit the humours of men, or rather the drinesse and barrenesse of their hearts, being barren of all heavenly comfort: the Divell doth so drench them thorow with carnall delights and pleasures, as he keeps them from all taste of the sweetnes of that ioy that might come by profitable hearing of the word, and he perswades with them that indeed, that is a meanes to breed in them disquietnesse, griefe, sorrow, and much vexation. We must take heed of this deceit working on our corruption, and know that a speciall end of preaching, praying, and other ministeriall actions, is, that our hearts might be filled with heavenly comfort; yea, such comfort as will season all other outward comforts, and make them truly comfortable; yea, such comfort as will turne our affliction to triumph, Rom. 8. 37. and such as once begun shall never be taken from us, Ioh. 16. 22. but shall continue with us for ever. Let us then banish and cast out of our mindes, all such deceiving thoughts that the ministry of the Word, Sacraments, Prayers, and other holy exercises, are meanes to strip us of all comfort; they are meanes (indeed) to humble us, and to wound us for our finnes, but yet to binde us up againe with heavenly comfort, to worke in us peace of conscience, to settle us in assurance of our right to eternall life, and to give us a taste and beginning of that ioy eye hath not seene, eare hath not heard, nor the heart of man conceived.

One thing more observe we from these words: the words (as I shewed) are thus to be conceived, that their hearts labouring and ready to faint, might be encouraged and raised up with comfort.

See then the necessity of encouragement against adversaries of the truth, if

One speciall end to be aimed at in all ministeriall actions, is the comfort of mens hearts.

Use 1.
Confutation of the Popish manner of teaching.

Use 2.
Refutation of a cavill of the flesh against diligent attending on the ministry of the Word.

Dott. 2.
Encourage-
ment against
adversaries of
the truth is
necessary.

Vse
Wee must pray
earnestly that
they who stand
for the main-
tenance of the
truth, may
joyne together
against the co-
mon adversa-
ries of the
truth.

I Cond.

*Interpreta-
tion.*

Dott. 3.
They that hold
communion
with their bre-
thren in Chri-
stian love, are
most fit to re-
ceive heavenly
comfort by the
holy ordinan-
ces of God.

true Christians be not encouraged by such as are to fight for them as Generalls and Captaines, I meane the Ministers of the Gospell, they faint and are ready to fall under the hands of such as seeke to make a prey of them, Galath. 5. 12. I would to God they were even cut off, which doe disquiet you. The originall word signifieth to put them out of their estate, and to drive them out of house and home, as enemies doe in time of warre: and it gives us to understand, that if the enemies of the truth be suffered to have their wills, and the people of God be not encouraged and strengthened by comfortable exhortations, prayers, and other meanes against them, they will in the end sacke and spoile them of their comfort.

We therefore are to be instant and earnest with the Lord in prayer, that such as are to fight for us, and stand for the maintenance of the truth, may be knit together as one man, and may joyne their forces against the common adversaries of the truth, the Papists: for surely, they beginne to gather ground and to encroach upon us: wee therefore are to pray unto the Lord, (that is all we can doe) that these differences amongst the Ministers of the Gospel being but in circumstance, not in substance (as Popish enchanters buzze into the heads of the simple) that these differences may be compounded, and that they may joyne hearts, hands, and all their force against the adversaries of our comfort, and may be better able to minister unto us encouragement, strength, and continuall supply of heavenly comfort.

Come wee now to the first condition of such as are capable of comfort of heart, in the next words, (that their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love) the word here rendered (knit together) doth signifie such a conjunction and knitting together, as is of the parts and members of the same body, which are conjoynd and knit together by ligaments, by nerves and sinewes, and so the word is used by the Apostle, Ephes. 4. 16. *By whom all the body being coupled and knit together by every joynt for the furniture thereof.* Thus then these words are to be conceived, they being coupled and knit together thorow the bond of love, as the members of the naturall body are by nerves and sinewes. Wee are here to marke that the Apostle makes it a speciall condition of such as were capable of the comfort hee driveth at in all his painfull labours, and sufferings, that they were such as were knit together in love.

Hence we may gather: That joyning together in love with our Christian brethren, it makes way and entrance for inward comfort offered, and afforded from the outward meanes of comfort: such as hold fellowship and communion with their brethren in Christian love, are most capable, and most fit to receive heavenly comfort, by the holy ordinances, and by the exercises of religion, preaching, prayer, and the like meanes of spirituall comfort: for why? that joyning together in love is a forcible meanes to procure, and to bring downe a blessing from heaven upon Gods ordinances appointed for the comfort of his chosen, to make them comfortable to us in particular. We read, Psal. 133. where brethren joyne together in love, and dwell together in unity, it is not onely a good and comely thing, but such a thing as hath promise of a blessing annexed unto it: it is a meanes to procure a blessing upon our hearing of the word of comfort, to make that effectuell for our comfort, 2 Cor. 8. The Apostle doth avouch that his ministry wrought as great grace and as great comfort in the Macedonian Churches, as in any other whatsoever, and withall hee gives testimony of them, that they were such as were knit together in love, and made their love knowne by their ready contribution to the reliefe of the poore Saints. Joyning in love together, is a meanes to bring downe a blessing on our prayers to the comfort of our soules, Psalm. 86. 1. *David* had encouragement to call upon God with assurance of comfort to the preservation of his life, when hee could truly plead that hee joynd with the Saints in love, and that hee did manifest his love to-
wards

wards them by workes of mercy, *Preserve thou my soule for I am mercifull*, I might thus goe on to other particulars: but these may suffice to shew that ioyning together in love, is a meanes to bring downe a blessing upon the ordinances of God, and to make them effectually to our comfort, and so it makes way for inward comfort offered unto us, from the outward meanes of comfort; yea, it makes away for comfort offered unto us, when we have most neede of comfort, in our feares, temptations and afflictions, either of body or minde: if we be such as are linked to our brethen in love, it inviteth the godly to repaire unto us in our troubles, it makes them desirous to refresh our hearts with words of comfort, it strengthens their hope in their supplications and prayers to God for us: yea, it minister's arguments of comfort to our own soules: though other men should not come at us, or deale so well with us, as to minister comfort unto us, by counsell prayers, and other meanes, yet our owne consciences telling us that we are such as are knit to our brethen in love, that testimony of our owne hearts with the testimony of the spirit of God, will support our soules in the greatest extremitie, 1 Ioh. 3. 14. *We know we are translated from death unto life, because wee love the brethen, &c.* What then shall daunt or dismay us? It was Iob's case when his friends were *Physicians of no valne*, Iob 13. 4. not able to apply the word of comfort aright, and *miserable comforters*, then did Iob amongst other arguments of comfort to himselfe, recount and call to minde this that he had held communion of love, with the poorest Saints of God, and testified his love by fruits of mercy: as we may reade Iob. 31. from verse 16. to 23.

How then shall not this affect our soules, and stirre up our hearts to ioyne together in Christian love, and to labour to bee knit fast one to another by the bond of true love, seeing ioyning one with another in love, is a meanes to give way to true comfort of heart offered from the outward meanes of comfort yea to procure a blessing upon the ordinances of God, appointed for the comfort of his chosen; yea, such a thing as will yeeld matter of comfort, when friends who should comfort us doe faile, and forsake us: who then will not be moved to ioyne with his brethen in love? yea, let me conclude with the Apostle, Phil. 2. 1. 2. *If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, any comfort yielded from love, then fulfill my ioy,* (it would indeed be a great ioy to all that feare God) to see it, that ye be like minded, *having the same love.*

Againe, that ioyning together in love, is a meane to make way and entrance for inward comfort offered from the outward meanes of comfort; yea, procuring a blessing on the meanes of comfort. What then may we thinke of distraction, and of drawing oer hearts a sunder one from another, through envy, hatred, rankor and malice? surely, that must needs bring forth the contrary effects, even set a barre betwene us and inward comfort, and make us unfit to receive it, yea, bring downe iudgement instead of mercy, and a curse instead of that comfort that might come unto us by the ordinances of God, appointed for the comfort of his chosen. Such persons as have their hearts full of swelling, heart-burping, and deadly hatred against their brethen, and such as have their monthes filled with galling, bitter and venomous speeches, or doe any way breake the bond of love, and so continue: can they looke that the Lord should give them any grace, or comfort by his word or other holy ordinances? No certainly: the Apostle hath taught us that such persons have foule and defiled hands, 1 Tim. 2. 8 *I will that men pray, every where lifting up pure hands without wrath.* If there be wrath and contention in the heart, the hands are soyled, and made unfit to compass Gods Altar, and the Lord doth challenge men for comming into his house with bloody hands, Isai. 1. 15; yea, he saith, *If we stretch out such hands, hee will hide his eyes from us, and though wee make many prayers, hee will not heare us.* Wee are now shortly to be made partakers of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, thereby to seale up our union with Christ, and our faith in his blood,

Vse 1.

A forcible motive to stirre us up to ioyne together in Christian love.

Vse 2.

Distraction & drawing our hearts a sunder one from another, brings forth a fearful effect.

and to testifie our communion with the members of Christ. Let us know wee can looke for no comfort by receiving that Sacrament which is full of comfort to a worthy receiver, unlesse we be knit together in true Christian love one to another: if we come to be knit more neerely to Christ, and be devided one from another, we deceive our selves, wee shall but seale up indgement to our selves, and eate and drinke our owne damnation. Now I know the Devill will bee ready to catch advantage upon this speech of mine, and will put it into the heads of such as be at oddes, and iarre with others, that therefore it is good for them to forbear comming to the Sacrament, because they cannot receive it with comfort, they cannot comewith quier mindes. See the cunning of the old Serpent, how hee can put on the person of a teacher, and take on him to teach men what is good for them, to avoyd the danger of damnation (if wee may beleve him:) indeed it is not good for men to come to the table of the Lord in the dregges of their malice and hatred: but why are they not (as they ought) with speed reconciled both to God and men? will they continue and goe on in their malice and unchristian iarres, and make that a sufficient plea, and reason of weight to keepe them from the table of the Lord? who taught them to suffer the sunne to goe downe on their wrath, and so take the Devill to bed with them? yea, to lodge in the closet of their hearts, and then to plead that as an excuse to keepe them from the Lords Table? this is even to adde drunkenesse to thirst, one sinne to another, or when wee have wounded our selves by sinne to goe to the Divell for a medicine. I would demand of such persons but this one thing: let them answer if they can, they say they cannot come to the Sacrament with hope of any comfort: let that be granted, it is true, so long as they continue in their malice. Let them tell me then, if the Lord should now in this state wherein they are, lay his heavie hand upon them, (as they are in continuall perill of strokes and judgements to light on them:) being at enmity with their brethren, *they abide in death*, 1 Ioh. 3. 14. What then can be said unto them for their comfort? if good and godly men come unto them of purpose to speake to their comfort, what can they say to mitigate their feares, or to lessen their torment of soule and conscience? surely nothing, till they have given some evident token of their repentance, and of thorow reconciliation with their brethren, and then they may justly doubt of the truth of their repentance, and that it is but forced and not of sincerity: yea, their owne hearts may justly doubt of it, and be most forward and forcible to accuse and to condemne them: and *if our hearts condemne us; God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things*. 1 Ioh. 3. 20. he also will condemne us.

Let this then be thought on, and let it stirre up such as be at difference and jarre with their brethren, to seeke for speedy reconciliation: and let them not make their quarrell and contention, a pretence to keepe them from the Lords table, for that is to adde sinne to sinne: but this day before to morrow let them labour to be reconciled to their brethren, least the punishing hand of God overtake them, and then they be left, not only voyd of comfort, but incapable of any comfort, and in such a case as the best men in the world shall not be able to minister sound comfort unto them.

We are further to marke, that the Apostle saith not, being such as love one another, but being knit together in love: he sets out their union through love by a similitude from the conjunction of the members of a naturall body.

Hence we are taught, that true believers are neerly coupled & compacted together one to another through love, as the members of one body are by nerves and sinewes, it is an usuall and knowne comparison of Scripture to compare true believers to the members of one body, true believers of the primitive times, though they were a multitude, yet they are said to be *of one heart and of one soule*, Act. 4. 32. and therefore (no doubt) they were as one body. And this may

Doct. 4.
True believers
are as neerly
coupled toge-
ther through
love, as the
members of
one body.

may serve as a ground of triall. Hereby we may try our love one towards another, whether it be true Christian love, or counterfeit and carnall love: if we be so knit together in love grounded on the Image of God, as it were as easie to pull an arme or a legge from the body of a man, as us one from another, then is our love true Christian love: and if by this rule we examine our love, we shall finde that many of us are much defective in this duty. Can wee perswade our selves wee are knit together in love as the members of one body, and yet upon a matter of a trifling profit, yea, upon suspicion of some worldly losse grow discontented, start asunder, and breake the bond of love, yea, breake out into opprobrious termes and vile slanders? Is this to be compacted and knit together, as the members of one body? if we so thinke, we deceive our selves. This is that the Wise man speakes of, Prov. 26. 23. *As silver drosse overlaid upon a pots beard, so are burning lips and an evill heart*: even to have burning lips, lips as it were inflamed with the fire of love, professing great measure of love, but an heart cold, wicked and mischievous: and that we may be stirred up to a reformation of our selves, consider wee onely this one thing.

Wee can never be assured of our union with Christ Jesus, till wee finde our selves knit together in love one to another: for though that be first in nature, yet this is first knowne, and we can never know that but by this. If any say hee loves God, and that hee is assured of Gods love to him, and yet be not in love with his brother, hee deceives himselfe, he is no better than a liar. If then wee would not be found liars against the good of our owne soules, and prove our selves still in the dregs of nature, having no fellowship with Christ Jesus the fountaine of all our comfort, let us never rest till we be knit together in love, grounded in the image of God, and so fast, as nothing in the world (whatsoever falls out) be able to pull us asunder.

Now to the second condition of such as are capable of inward comfort in the next words [*And knit together in all riches of the full assurance of understanding*]. By these words, in all riches of the full assurance of understanding, &c. we are to understand the faith of the Gospell, as may appeare by the words following where the Apostle doth explaine himselfe, that this full assurance of understanding, is a knowledge of the myserie of God, even the Father of Christ, and in him a gracious Father unto us: now this faith is here described and set out, by the generall nature of it, that it is an understanding, or knowledge, and that further amplified by the quality of it, that it is a certain, or an assured knowledge, a full perswasion of understanding, so the word signifieth: and againe, by the measure of that certainty in these words, *in all riches*, which is a borrowed phrase to signifie plenty, and a great measure. Thus then are these words briefly to be conceived: In the faith of the Gospell, which is a most plentiful and infallible certainty of understanding.

Here first we are to marke, that the Apostle was not content to say, they being knit together in love; but hee addes further, and knit together in the true faith of Jesus Christ, (for that is the generall here set downe in other termes.) Hence ariseth this conclusion.

That a conjunction and joyning together in love, and in one and the same true faith, they must ever goe together: as we must be knit together in love, so we must be conjoynd in one and the same true faith: these two may not be divorced, nor put asunder one from the other: for as the Apostle teacheth, without one faith, there cannot be one body: we may observe it, Ephes. 4. when hee hath spoken of *one body*, verse 4. hee subjoynes, verse 5. *one faith*, giving us to understand, that there cannot be one body, without one faith, no, though it be of such as are knit together most neerely by some outward bond: for example, by the bond of marriage, the husband and wife are not one body, under the same head Christ Jesus, unless they be knit together in the same

Vse

Triall of our love one towards another whether it be true or counterfeit.

2 Concl.

Interpretation.

Doct. 5.

Joyning together in love and in one and the same true faith must goe together.

Vse.
A duty of such
as enter into
that neere u-
nion of mar-
riage.

Note.

Doct. 6.
True faith in
the generall
nature of it, is
a knowledge
of things to
be beleaved.

Obiect.

Answer.

true faith of Iesus Christ, they are indeede one flesh by the bond of marriage, as they have relation one to another, but in relation to Christ the head of all true beleivers, they are not knit together in one body, if they be dis-joynd in faith. And this ought to be thought on by such as are to enter into that neere union of marriage: to them it may most fitly be applyed, they are to looke that they joyne together, not only in mutuall love one to another, but in one and the same faith of Iesus Christ: and against this doe they offend, who ioyne in that neere bond of marriage with such as be not of the same faith, and the same religion. It is good for us to be advised in matching our children or our selves in marriage, and that we especially looke at the truth of faith, and the soundnesse of religion.

Let us know that it is a secret poyson that destroyes vertue more than any thing, when the godly are unequally yoked with the ungodly: let us not stand upon our wisdom in this point, that wee are wise, and able to avoyd the danger: remember that *Salomon* was full of wisdom, and beloved of God, yet for all his wisdom, hee was overthrowne by matching with the daughters of the wicked. It is said of *Iehoram*, that hee forsooke the way of the Lord, and wrought all wickednesse in full measure: and why? because (saith the text) the daughter of *Abab* was his wife. And let this warne all, whom it may concerne, that in matching our selves, or our children in marriage, wee looke chiefly to the truth and soundnesse of Religion.

The next thing offered from these words (if wee looke on them as a description of faith) is, that true faith for the generall nature of it, is an understanding, or knowledge: an evidence and light of spirituall knowledge is the generall nature of true faith; the speciall forme and proper act of it, is an apprehension, and a particular application of the saving promise knowne, and of Christ promised, the substance of the covenant of grace: but the generall nature of it, is a knowledge of things to be beleaved. Hence it is that the Lord saith by his Prophet, *Isai. 53. verse 11. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, &c.* And our Saviour *Ioh. 17. 3. This is life eternal, that they know thee to be the only very God, and whom thou hast sent Iesus Christ.* The Apostle (*1 Pet. 3. 15.*) teacheth us to be ready alwaies to give an account, to make an apologie, and to stand in defence of our hope, which cannot be without knowledge. *Augustine* proveth by the Text of the Apostle, *Rom. 10. verse 14.* where it is said, *Faith comes by hearing, &c.* that faith is ioyned with knowledge: for how can a man beleave by hearing that hee understands not? It is then a cleare point, that faith for the generall nature of it, is a light of understanding. It will be said, and indeede it is the obiection of the Papists, (who hold faith to be no knowledge, but a bare assent of the minde without understanding of that, whereunto the minde assenteth) that the Apostle (*1 Cor. 13. 2.*) makes a plaine distinction betweene knowledge and faith, and doth sever them as being two sundry things: *If I knew all secrets, and all knowledge, yet if I had all faith, &c.* therefore (say they) faith is a knowledge.

This is a silly and slender reason, if it be well considered: looke upon the text and consider it; Is this a good reason to say, the Apostle doth reckon up knowledge and faith severally: therefore knowledge and faith have no fellowship or agreement one with another? Then this also is a good reason, The gift of prophesie and knowledge are reckoned up severally: therefore prophesie and knowledge cannot meete together in one man, he that hath the gift of prophesie, hath no knowledge: how absurd this is, every man may see, and the other must needs be as grosse. It remains then a truth (notwithstanding this cavill of the Papists) that faith is a light of understanding, and necessarily brings with it an illumination of the minde. Let no man then deceive himselfe, let no man thinke hee hath true faith when he hath no knowledge or understanding of

of things to be beleaved, and is not able to render any reasonable account of his faith, what he doth hold and beleve needfull to salvation, he that so thinkes deceives himselfe: and let it be thought on by such as come to the Table of the Lord. Herein stands one part of their examination: they are to examine their knowledge in the doctrine of the Sacraments, touching the Sacramentall relation of signes with the things signified: I say not, if men have illumination and knowledge, then they have faith: for illumination is a common gift, and though it be from the spirit, yet it is not of the spirit: but this I dare be bold to say, if there be no knowledge, then there is no faith: it is the first action of the Spirit of God in the renovation of the Image of God in his Elect, *to renew them in the spirit of their mindes*, Ephes. 4. verse 23. If there be darkenesse in the minde, certainly there is nothing but sinne in all other shouldes of the soule. Our Saviour saith, Matthe. 6. verse 23. *If thine eye be dark, then all the body shall be dark.* It is a true saying that one hath, that an ignorant heart is alwaies a sinfull heart, and a man without knowledge is a man without grace. Let this be thought on, and let it stirre us up to follow the counsell of the Wise-man, Proverbs 2. verse 3. to call for wisdom, and to cry to heaven by prayer for understanding, and by the use of all good meanes, hearing, reading, meditating in the Word of God, and to seeke for it, yea to digge for it, as for gold and precious stones. And a little to helpe forward our desire and endeavour after knowledge, remember the words of the Apostle, 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8. that *the Lord Iesus at the day of judgement shall shew himselfe from heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire, rendering vengeance unto them that did not know God, and which obey not unto the Gospel of our Lord Iesus Christ.* These two follow close one upon another, ignorance of God, and want of obedience unto the Gospel of Christ: and this ignorance is so foule a sinne, as it shall be sufficient to bring downe vengeance on them (in whom it shall be found) at the coming of Christ to Iudgement.

Come wee from the generall nature of Faith, to the quality of it, as it is an understanding, that it is a full assurance and an infallible certainty of knowledge, and that a rich or plentiful knowledge. Much might be spoken on these words: but that I will briefly note from them shall be this. That true faith is not a confused notion wrapped up all together in uncertainty, so as a man cannot be sure what he holds, or beleaves: but it is a distinct, a certaine, and an infallible knowledge, which makes a demonstration in the minde of the beleever, grounded not on reason, or sense, but upon divine testimony, and upon the Word of God. Hence (Hebr. 11. 1.) it is said to be *the evidence of things which are not seene*, that is, the infallible demonstration and certainty, whereby the minde being convinced by divine testimonie, doth most firmly embrace the promises of God touching remission of sinnes, and iustification by Christ: the Scripture is most plentiful in the prooffe of this.

That true faith is a distinct, a certaine, and infallible knowledge: where then is any place for implicate faith taught by the Papists, who say, it is sufficient for a Christian to beleave as the Church beleaves, though he never know distinctly and certainly what the Church beleaves? This is indeede no true faith, but a blockish ignorance, and this doctrine tends to hold men in blindness, superstition, and perpetuall ignorance. We are to renounce it, and to remember that true faith is a distinct certaine and infallible knowledge: yet that this doctrine be not a snare to intangle and perplex the consciences of the weak, remember further, that though true faith be a distinct, certaine, and infallible knowledge, yet it is not a perfect knowledge. Father *Latimer* said well, there is great difference betweene certaine knowledge, and cleare or perfect knowledge, certain knowledge may be of things absent that appeare not, but cleare or perfect knowledge requireth the presence of the object, it is said we see now darkely as

Use

Wee may not
thinke that we
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Note.

Doff. 2.

True faith is a
distinct, cer-
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fallible know-
ledge.

Use.

Popish impli-
cite faith no
true faith.

through a glasse. A man may therefore distinctly and certainly know that which he beleeves, though not cleereely and perfectly: and this may comfort such as have but a litle portion of saving knowledge, if it be certaine, though weake, it is pleasing to God, and comfortable to themselves, if so be they content not themselves with it, but labour to encrease it; and to grow from one measure to another: for so will every one that hath any beginning of saving knowledge. He that thinks he hath a portion of saving knowledge, and contents himselfe with it, and never labours to encrease it, and to come to a rich assurance of knowledge, hath indeed no true knowledge at all.

Now to the last words of this verse, which are (as I shewed) added by way of opposition, as an explication of that word (*understanding*) what it is, namely, a knowledge of the myserie of God, to which is subjoyned how God is revealed in that myserie, namely, in distinction of persons (even the Father of Christ, and Christ the sonne of the Father.)

Interpretation.

[To know the myserie of God, even the Father, and of Christ.] By the word *myserie*, having this addition, the myserie of God, and God distinguished into the Father and Sonne; wee are to understand the Gospell, which is the doctrine of the humiliation, exaltation, humanity, divinity, office of meditation, and all things concerning the life and death of Christ: and this doctrine is called a myserie, as heretofore I have shewed; because the things delivered in the Gospell are wonderfull, deepe, and secret, hid from the eye of naturall reason, and made knowne only by diuine revelation: and in this myserie of the Gospell, is God revealed to be the Father of Christ, and Christ to be the Sonne of God the Father. Thus then are these words to be conceiued, as if the Apostle had said: To know the deepe secret and hidden myserie of the Gospell, manifesting and revealing unto us God, as hee is the Father of Christ, and Christ the sonne of the Father, and God equall to his Father.

Now we are to marke, that faith being (as yee have heard) for the generall nature a knowledge, it is here further set out together with the object of that knowledge together with that thing whereof it is a knowledge, that it is a knowledge of the myserie of God, that is of the Gospell, revealing God the Father, and the Mediator Christ Iesus. Hence ariseth this point of doctrine, that the proper object of the knowledge of faith is the doctrine of the Gospell, true faith that brings comfort is a knowledge of God reauled in the myserie of the Gospell.

Dott. 8.
True saving
faith is a know-
ledge of God
reueled in the
myserie of the
Gospell.

It is not a knowledge of God reueled in the booke of the creatures, spoken of, Rom. 1. 20. nor a knowledge of God reueled in the morall law of God, where God requireth absolute, complete, perfect, and personall righteousness; which if any could reach unto, hee should be fully acceptable to God, and needed not to flie to Christ to be his Redeemer: but comfortable and saving faith is a knowledge of God, as hee is made knowne in the covenant of grace, in the Gospell, even a light and knowledge of the glorious maiesty of the myserie of God in the face of Iesus Christ, as saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 4. 6. And hence it is that the Apostle, Rom. 10. 3. saith, Though the Iewes knew the righteousness which is of the Law, and went about to stablish it, yet they were ignorant, and had no knowledge of true righteousness, the righteousness of God and the righteousness of faith. And in the same Chapter, verse 8. hee calls the word of the Gospell, the word of Faith, as being that word which saving faith doth properly eye, and hath respect unto: for indeed the drift and scope of all the oracles of God, and of the whole Scripture, is, and ever was, to leade Gods elect to the knowledge of the saving promise, and of Christ promised, the substance of the Gospell: and howsoever *Moses* gave a Law, which by reason of our corruption is the Minister of death, yet wrote he also of Christ, Ioh. 5. 46. and did fore-shew the death and passion of Christ for sinne, in many types and

and figures; as in the brazen Serpent; and in the sacrifices of the ceremoniall Law, yea, the drift of the morall Law it selfe, was to bring to Christ, Gal. 3. 24. it being the end and scope of the whole Scripture, to leade the chosen of God to the knowledge of the saving promise, unto faith: for saving faith hath respect unto the saving promise, it must needs be that faith is a knowledge of God revealed in the mysterie of the Gospell.

Let no man then fancie to himselfe that hath attained true faith, when hee hath onely a superficiall and confused knowledge of God, such knowledge of God as may be had by the light of nature; or such as may be gathered by the sight of the creatures. Is there any such among Christians will some say? I answer, undoubtedly this exhortation is not unseasonable in respect of many that professe Christianity; many there be who having lived in the bosome of the Church, and in the cleere light of the Gospell, ten, twenty, thirty, yea forty or fifty yeeres, and yet (to their shame may it be spoken) have no more true and saving knowledge of God (as God hath revealed himselfe in the Gospell) than the very Heathen, who never heard of Christ. And that I may not seeme to accuse, but to prove that I speake, doe not most men and women imagine they know God; as hee is revealed in the Gospell, when they conceive him to be a God of all mercy, and that the Gospell makes knowne nothing but his mercy, grace and goodnesse in Christ Jesus? I appeale to the hearts of many, whether they doe not this. Now what is this, but to misconceive of God, and to set up an Idoll in their owne braine? for in the Gospell God is made knowne unto us to be perfectly just, and perfectly mercifull; yea, which is a deepe myserie, *that the justice and mercy of God are reconciled*, and that both his perfect justice, and his perfect mercy, are met together, and pressed towards his chosen in Christ: if wee thus know not God, wee doe not know him as he hath revealed himselfe in the Gospell; and yet many having not this knowledge, fancie to themselves they have faith, and doe not sticke to say, though they want knowledge, they have a good mind: marke how the holy Ghost hath met with this fancy, *without knowledge the mind is not good*, Prov. 19. 2. It is not possible the mind should be good without knowledge. Thus have I shewed, without knowledge of the saving promise of God revealed in the Gospell, it is not possible that any should have faith. Let no man then deceive himselfe, and thinke hee hath faith, and yet know not God in the face of Jesus Christ: let us all labour by the use of all good meanes (craving assistance of the Spirit of God, who onely revealeth the deepe things of God, 1 Cor. 2. 10) that we may come to the knowledge of God manifested in the Gospell: and consider wee this one thing, that the want of true faith is the cause of all judgments; it brings plagues of all kinds upon our soules, bodies, goods, and good names, yea, it is the cause of those judgements, wee many times foolishly ascribe to witches and wizards, when Gods hand is upon us in some strange manner, we ascribe it to witches and wizards, but indeed it is a wicked heart of unbelieve that hath brought that judgement upon us, that is the witch we may observe in *Jude*, verf. 5. that the people that were delivered out of Egypt, were afterward destroyed, but why? for their murmuring, their fornication, their tempting of God, their reviling of *Moses*? no, though these finnes were common amongst them, yet (saith the Text) they were destroyed for their unbelieve: therefore let us never rest till we have a measure of saving knowledge of God, as he hath revealed himselfe in the Gospell. What the word *mysterie* doth afford, I will not stand upon, having before spoken of the point: the next thing we are to marke, is, that the Apostle saith, to know God, and he stayes not there, but saith further, God the Father, and Christ his Sonne.

Hence I gather, that there is no true understanding of God, but as hee is knowne distinct in persons: it is not sufficient to know that he is one in essence; but wee are to know him distinguished in three persons, the Father, Sonne,

and

Use
Reproofe of
them that rest
in a confused
and superficiall
knowledge
of God.

Note.

Dott. 9.
It is nto enough
to know that
God is one
in essence,
but we must
also know
him distinguished
in three persons.

Use
We must looke
upon the unity
of the divine
essence, and the
trinity of per-
sons with a spi-
rituall eye of
faith.

Object.

Answer.

and holy Ghost, all eternall and equall in power, glory and maiesty, onely one true and everliving God; I say distinguished in persons: for we must not conceive the persons in the Trinity, as divided and severed one from another, as three men are really divided one from another, though all of one kinde; for the divine essence is infinite, and admits no division, but the whole essence of the Godhead is every person.

These things are hard to bee conceived, and we must looke on them with a spirituall eye, with the eye of faith, and pray that our eyes may be opened, and annointed with the eye-salve of the Spirit, for the right conceiving of the Unity of the divine essence, and the Trinity of persons: and that will keepe us from many dangerous errors. But to hold to the words of the Apostle in this place, know thus much, that God is the Father of Christ in respect of his Deity by nature, because he is of the same eternall essence with the Father, and of his humanity by personall union, because his humanity is assumed, and doth subsist in his Deity, Ioh. 1. 14. *the word was made flesh.* Thus is Christ the Sonne of God.

There remaine a doubt to be removed, occasioned from these words.

Some may say, Is true faith a knowledge of Christ to bee the sonne of God? the devils have this and so they confesse, Marke. 5. 7.

I answer, it is true, the devils have this knowledge of Christ, that hee is the Sonne of God: Now that is but the generall nature of faith: there is in iustifying faith, not onely this knowledge, that Christ is the Sonne of God, and the annointed Messiah to take away the sinnes of the world, but a particular acknowledgement of it that Christ is so to us. And so much is signified in the words of the Apostle; and thus wee are to conceive of Peters confession, Mat. 16. 16. though the Papists alleage it to the contrary: our Saviours answer in the next verse, *flesh and bloud hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven,* puts it out of all question, that Peters confession was more then a generall knowledge, and confession that may be in devils, unlesse we say the devils made the same by the holy Ghost, which were most absurd and blasphemous. There is then in faith for the generall nature of it, a knowledge that Christ is the Son of God, and there is a particular acknowledgement and application of it with comfort, and this we are to labour for.

Verf. 3. *In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

IN this verse (for the matter of it) is laid downe the first originall proposition that is handled in this Chapter namely, that proposition which the Apostle doth labour to strengthen and perswade the Colossians to imbrace and hold fast, and it is this.

That in Christ full and perfect knowledge of all things needfull to salvation is to be found.

Now this proposition is not plainly in these termes delivered, but it lies under a similitude; wherein Christ is likened to a treasury, or an house of store, and this knowledge to a treasure: and the Apostle saith, In him are laid up fast and close all the treasures of this knowledge.

For the better clearing of the text, let us enter into a more speciall examination of the words.

In whom] The originall word may be rendred *in whom*, or *in which*: for they may be referred either to the word *mystery*, or to Christ, all is one in the sense and meaning of the Apostle: for the matter and substance of the Gospell is Christ, and wee are to acknowledge no other Christ, but hee that is set before us in the Gospell: but the most received translation is, *[in whom]* with relation to Christ, *[all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,]* that is, the

The first generall proposition handled in this chapter.

Interpret.

the most excellent and precious thing of wisdom and knowledge: and wee are to understand by the word *wisdom*, the knowledge of things to be knowne and beleaved: and by the word *knowledge*, the knowledge of things to be praised: *are bid*, that is, are not knowne in respect of naturall men, and naturall reason. Thus then conceive the words of the Apostle, as if he had said, in which Christ are the most excellent and precious things needfull, *To be knowne either concerning faith, or good life to be found, though bid from naturall men, and naturall reason.*

Now first of all, the matter and substance of this verse, that in Christ all things needfull to be knowne to salvation are to be found; being considered together with the similitude under which it is delivered, doth afford this conclusion.

That Christ is the store-house of all saving and comfortable knowledge, in him is all saving knowledge laid up, as in a house of store, and from him onely it must be derived, from him onely must wee fetch all saving knowledge: for why? in Christ is treasured up the knowledge of the divine essence and nature, he being very God, 1 Ioh. 5. 20. the knowledge of the majesty and power of God manifested by his miracles, and resurrection, the knowledge of the justice, goodnesse, love and mercy of God, made knowne by his coming into the world, and suffering of death, 1 Tim. 1. 15. *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*, the knowledge of the worke of creation, government and preservation of the world, Heb. 1. 3. *he doth sustaine or beare up all things by his mighty word*, &c. In a word, the knowledge of the reconciliation, redemption, and salvation of Gods chosen, and of eternall life and glory reserved in heaven for them: all these are points of saving knowledge, to which all others may be reduced; and these are all to be found in Christ, and onely in him with comfort: hee is the volume in which all these, and all other points of saving knowledge are written, revealed, and made knowne to us. Hence then of necessity it followeth, that the knowledge of any thing out of Christ is not a comfortable knowledge, a knowledge tending to salvation, but rather to destruction and damnation: for example (holding our selves to the Apostles similitude) a knowledge of any merit, any satisfaction to God, and of any treasure of the Church out of Christ. The Papists would beare us in hand, that they know a treasure belonging to the infinite treasure of the satisfaction purchased by the passion of Christ out of Christ, and what is that? forsooth the passion of the blessed Virgine *Mary*, and of all other Saints, who suffered more (as they blasphemously speake) than their finnes required: this is no saving and comfortable knowledge, but an accursed and damnable knowledge, indeed a fancy and dreame of their owne; it is at jarre and discord within it selfe; for how can that which is infinite admit any thing to be adjoynd and added unto it? they acknowledge an infinite treasure of satisfaction in Christ, and yet they say there belongs to it other satisfaction: what is this, but with one and the same breath to contradict themselves? I leave them therefore to vanish in their gaine-sayings, and come to our selves, upon this ground.

That all saving knowledge is to bee derived from Christ: consider wee thus much, that for us to know any thing out of Christ, though the thing it selfe bee good, yea even goodnesse it selfe, yea God himselfe, yet there is no comfort in such knowledge out of Christ, wee know him but as an angry Iudge, and as a God clothed with justice and judgement against us: yea to descend lower to things familiar, and of daily use with us, to know things given unto us of God, either spirituall or temporall, either concerning the good of our soules, as the word & Sacraments, &c. or the good of our bodies, as meat, drink, apparel, house, or land, &c. to know these things to be blessings of God, is not sufficient, that is no comfortable

Christ is the store-house of all saving and comfortable knowledge.

Use 1.
The knowledge of any thing out of Christ is not a comfortable knowledge.

Use 2.
There is no comfort in the knowledge of God, but of Christ, and much lesse in the knowledge of any other thing.

Question.
Answer.

Doff. 2.
Saving know-
ledge found
only in Christ,
is a thing most
precious.

Reason.

Vs.
Wee must la-
bour to bee
perswaded of
the excellency
of saving know-
ledge, and to
affect it ac-
cording to
the excellen-
cy of it.

comfortable knowledge, yet many rest in that knowledge, and thinke it enough if they can say, God hath blessed them with such and such things; the Hea-then were able to say so, there is no comfort in such knowledge: our know-ledge of things given us of God must goe a step further, it must be grounded in Christ, that it may be comfortable: we must labour to know good things given us, not only to be blessings of God in themselves, but blessings to us, in, and by Jesus Christ: we must endeavour to use the Apostles forme of praise and thank-giving; Blessed be God, who hath blessed us with spirituall, yea and with the temporall blessings we doe enjoy, in Christ. Some may say, how is that to be done? Labour to have part in the merit of Christ, to apprehend and apply the merit of his death to thy life: then thou shalt know with comfort, that the good things vouchsafed unto thee, are given as pledges of Gods love, and are blessings to thee, in and by his merit: and if thy knowledge be not thus grounded in Christ, it is so farre from being comfortable, as it doth let thee understand (to thy discomfort) that the good things given unto thee, are but given thee to leave thee without excuse, and for further increase of thy condemnation. Let this be thought on, and let it stirre us up to labour to have our knowledge of all things we enjoy in this life, grounded in the merit of Christ, the store-house and foun-taine of all saving knowledge. The next thing wee are to marke is, that the knowledge of things needfull to be knowne to salvation, laid up in Christ, is de-livered, not in plaine termes, but under this comparison, *the treasure of wisdom and knowledge*: hence we may take up this conclusion.

That saving knowledge, or knowledge and wisdom unto salvation, which is to be found only in Christ, is a thing of great price, it is a treasure of inestima-ble worth and excellency: the Apostle sets it downe as a thing whereof he was fully resolved, that nothing in the world was able to come neere the worth and excellency of this; other things compared with this, he held them as losse and dung: yea doubleste (saith hee) I thinke all things but losse for the excellent knowledge sake of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have counted all things losse, and doe iudge them to be dung, that I might win Christ, Phil. 3. 8. he saith, *he esteemed not, he made no account of knowing any thing, save Iesus Christ and him crucified*, 1 Cor. 2. 2. ioine to this that of the Wiseman, Prov. 3. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. where he saith, *the merchandize of this is better than the merchandize of silver and the gaine thereof is better than gold; it is more precious than pearles, and all things that thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her, &c.*

The reason of this is plaine. Saving knowledge is a thing of greater worth than any thing in the world, because it concernes our everlasting good, the good of our bodies and soules for ever: other things concerne but our tempo-rary good onely in the time of this life, *What shall it profit a man* (saith our Savi-our, Math. 16. 26. *though he win the whole world, if hee lose his owne soule?* where he gives us to understand, that if a man should gaine the whole world, it would doe him no good at all in respect of his everlasting good, that gaine may stand with the losse of Heaven and everlasting happinesse; therefore saving know-ledge found in Christ, is a thing of farre greater worth than any thing in the world.

Now this being so, that saving knowledge in Christ is so excellent a treasure, wee must labour to be perswaded of the excellency of it, and to be affected to-wards it accordingly, wee must have our affections enlarged, and have even a covetous desire after this same heavenly treasure (this is an holy covetousnesse) yea with the wise Merchant, Matth. 13. 45. *that seeketh good pearles, and having found this pearle of great price, we are to sell all we have, we are to renounce all that nature hath endued us withall, and to despise and set light by all the pro-fits, pleasures, honours and preferments of this life, that wee may purchase this pearle of such excellent worth: and this exhortation was never more needfull than*

then now in these dayes, wherein most men and women have their hearts set upon the world, and though they have liberty and opportunity, yea, perswasion and encouragement, to store up the treasures found in Iesus Christ, yet they through greedy desire of the corruptible and casuall treasures of the world, are wholly withheld from seeking this one thing onely necessary: what is the cause of this? Let us consider the cause of it, that (finding that) wee may labour to remove it, that so the effect may fall to the ground: surely, the cause of it is this: men are possessed with that conceit, of the Laodiceans, Revel. 3. 17. that they are rich and need not the riches of Christ, to make them truly rich: they finde not themselves to stand in need of the precious treasures found in Christ to enrich them: they goe on in a fearefull dulnesse and deadnesse of heart, and doe neither see nor feelee their owne poverty, and wretchednesse.

Haply some will say wee confesse our selves to bee sinners, therefore we cannot thinke such a wicked thought, that we have no need of Christ.

I answer to them that pleade thus for themselves, it may bee they confesse themselves to be sinners, and yet withall, they thinke not that they stand in such neede of Christ as they doe: for (consider it) doe they not many times confesse themselves to be sinners onely in a generall manner; that all men are sinners, and they among the rest? But come we to the tryall with them in particulars: doe they not then goe about to extenuate, and to excuse their sinnes, accounting great sinnes, little sinnes, as breaking of the Sabbath, customary swearing, and the like? I appeale to themselves, whether it be not so with many: now where these things are, though the mouth say I am a sinner, yet the heart saith no, I stand not in such neede of Iesus Christ: and this is that which make men not to value the riches of Iesus Christ as they ought. Wee must therefore labour to find our selves stand in neede of the rich treasure found in Christ, yea, that wee stand in neede of his precious blood to wash away the least of our sinnes, and that (without the rich grace and mercy of God in Iesus Christ) the least of our sinnes makes us liable to the curse and everlasting perdition, and that wee shall account the treasure of saving knowledge (found in Iesus Christ) more precious than all the riches in the world.

Consider we further but this one thing: saving knowledge in Christ will stand by us, and comfort us when all things in the world forsake us. Doe wee not see riches taken from men, or else men taken suddenly away from their riches, neither their silver nor their gold is able to deliver them in the day of the Lords wrath, &c. Zephani. 1. 8. but saving knowledge in Christ is durable riches, Pro. 8. 18 it is a treasure that will continue for ever, and minister comfort in the greatest extremitie. Let us then in wisdom affect this treasure, and seeke after it, and even despise all things in the world in respect of it, that so wee may lay up in store a good foundation against the time to come.

One thing more observe wee: the Apostle saith, the excellent and precious knowledge of things needfull to be knowne to salvation, are hid in Christ.

This considered, together with the relative to whom it is hid (namely) to naturall men, doth offer this knowne conclusion.

That saving knowledge found in Christ, though it be a thing of great price, yet it is not apparent to every mans eye, every man seeth not the lustre and beauty of this precious knowledge: every mans minde is not able to comprehend the worth of it, no nor any mans minde, but onely their mindes that are opened and enlightened by the spirit of God, Math. 16. 17. Our Saviour saith to Peter (upon his confession, that he was the Christ) *flesh and blood had not revealed that unto him, but his father which is in heaven*, 1 Cor. 2. 14 *the naturall man perceiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishnes unto him, neither can he know them: he hath neither power nor possibility in himselfe to know them let them labor & strive never so much, why? because they are spiritually discerned*

Object.

Answer.

Note.

Doctrine 3.
The excellency and worth of saving knowledge, is not knowne to every man.

Reason.

The reason is, (as I have heretofore shewed.) Because there is no seed of saving knowledge in nature: it is above the reach of nature created in the state of innocency, much more of nature in the state of sinne and corruption. Now then is it so, that saving knowledge found in Christ (being a most excellent treasure) is not knowne (much lesse esteemed so to bee) but onely of them, to whom it pleaseth God to discover it? is it a treasure hidden and kept close from the sight of many in the world?

Use

They that have the excellency of saving knowledge revealed unto them, are to be thankfull to God for the same.

Let then as many as have it revealed unto them, be thankfull to God: it is esteemed a great favour, if a rich King shew to any the house of his treasure. We reade *Isai. 39. 2.* that *Hezekiah* to gratifie the King of Babels Ambassadors (that brought him letters and a present) shewed them the house of the treasures, the silver and the gold, and spices, and the precious oylment, and all the house of his armour, &c. how great a favour then is it for the Lord (the King of heaven and earth) to shew to us, yea to give us the eyes to see with comfort the riches and treasures found in his treasury, even in Iesus Christ, better than all the riches and treasures of the world? How much are we in this regard bound to magnifie the Lords mercie? he hath not so dealt with every one. We may see thousands left in this blindness, not able to see the things we see: yea, we may see in them our owne image, what wee were before the Lord put a difference betweene them and us. Let it therefore stirre up as many as have their eyes opened, to see with comfort the rich treasures found in Christ, to magnifie and praise the Lord for so great a mercy: yea, let our hearts bee enlarged, and mouthes opened to praise the Lord for the comfortable sight of this excellent treasure, when it pleaseth him to strip us of earthly riches, which happily wee had in great abundance. Let us in such a case and time with *David*, *Psal. 42. 11.* rouse up our fainting soules, and say, *Why art thou cast downe my soule? and why art thou disquieted within mee? Waite on God, for I will yet (notwithstanding all this) give thanks to the Lord.* It is the counsell of the Preacher, *Eccles. 7. 16.* In the day of wealth be of good comfort, and in the day of affliction consider: and what hath a man, that is the childe of God, to consider? Surely among other things this, that God hath opened to him the doore of his Jewell house, and let him see to his great comfort the treasures that are found in Christ. This a childe of God ought to consider in time of the losse of outward riches: the consideration of this will swallow up all grieve for the losse of those things, and make him still lift up his heart, and open his mouth to blesse the Lord, and to say with *David*, *I will yet give him thanks, for (notwithstanding I have suffered great loss: in outward things) yet I still see to my comfort the treasures that are found in Christ, and I have still my part in them, which are better than all the treasures in the world.*

Verf. 4. *And this I say least any man should beguile you with enticing words.*

The second generall proposition handled in this chapter.

In this verse is laid downe the second generall proposition handled in this chapter (namely) this.

That all things out of Christ are meere deceit, and nothing worth.

And this proposition is delivered together with the Apostles purpose in propounding of the former: that bee laid before the Colossians the former proposition to this end, that they might not bee deceived by any thing tendered unto them out of Christ (all things out of him being meere deceit) the connexion is this.

I tell you that in Christ is to bee found full and perfect knowledge of all things needfull to salvation: and this I speake to this end, that you may bee kept from seducements of deceivers, such as goe about to thrust upon you any thing out of Christ in the matter of salvation. I tell you their words are but enticing

rising flattering words, their purpose is to beguile you: this I say, lest any should beguile you, &c.

So then in this verse we have the end of the propounding of the former proposition, that it was to keepe the Colossians from being deceived by seducers, together with the manner and meanes, whereby false impostors, and false teachers commonly use to deceive (namely) by enticing words. Some things are to be cleared in the words of this verse. The word translated (beguile) doth properly signifie to deceive the ignorant, and simple, in reasoning with them, thrusting upon them an error by false and deceitfull arguments, and reasons (with enticing words) (that is) with colourable speech, probable and plausible, carrying a shew of truth, when indeed there is no truth in it, and having in it a power to perswade.

Thus then the words are to be conceived.

This I say, lest any man in reasoning with you cunningly and deceitfully, should deceive you, and impose errors upon you, and that by meanes of his faire, probable, and deceitfull speech.

First, wee are here to marke, that the Apostle taught the Colossians, that in Christ is found full and perfect knowledge of all things needfull to salvation, not onely to this end, that they might know this and believe it, but that they might by the knowledge of it be kept from error, that they might thereby be armed and made able to stand against cunning seducers, such as should goe about to beguile them, and to corrupt them with error, under colour of truth, by faire, flattering, and plausible speeches. This observed, the conclusion following hence is this.

That sound knowledge of the truth, is not onely good in it selfe, but is also an excellent preservative against the delusions of subtil seducers, and a notable meanes to keepe us from being deceived by such as labour to corrupt us with error. Wee find it worthily expressed by Salomon, Prov. 2. 10. 11, 12. *When wisdom entreateth into thine heart, and knowledge delighteth thy soule:*

Then shall counsell preserve thee, and understanding shall keepe thee,

And deliver thee from the evil way, and from the man that speaketh froward things (that is) from the man whose mouth uttereth error, false doctrine, or enticement to sinne. Eph. 4. the Apostle shewes that Christ gave gifts to men, some to be Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, verse 11. for the building up of his body (the Church) in faith and knowledge, and then verse the 14. he shewes the use of that knowledge (namely) this, that we henceforth be no more children wavering, and carried about with every winde of doctrine, by the deceit of men and with craftinesse, whereby they lay waite to deceive.

But that we might be provided against the deceit and craftinesse of men, which is a plaine prooffe of the point in hand, that sound knowledge is a notable meanes to preserve us from being overtaken by the craft of Seducers: and the reason and ground of this is, that which we finde, Heb. 5. 14. such as have sound knowledge of the truth, have their wits exercised to discern between good and evil, between light and darknesse: they carry a light within them (which is *iudex sui & obliqui*,) whereby they are able to discover what is agreeable to the truth, and what is erroneous and contrary to the truth, and so cannot be over-reached and circumvented by such as goe about to deceive them with error. Would we then in these dangerous daies wherein so many lie in waite to seduce (and we see some drawne to Popery, some to Brownisme, some to one error, and some to another) would we be preserved and kept upright in the truth in the midst and throng of many deceivers, gone out purposely to deceive, who compass sea and land to make a child of the Divell, like to themselves? Then let us labour for sound knowledge of the truth: use with diligence the ordinances of God appointed to that end to beget knowledge: it is a reasoning of the flesh,

Doctr. 1.

Sound knowledge of the truth is not only good in it selfe, but it is also an excellent preservative against the delusions of cunning seducers.

Reason.

If we would be kept upright in the truth in the throng of many deceivers, wee must labour for sound knowledge of the truth.

and beguiling argument forced upon some men by strong delusion of Satan, to say thus, there be many seducers, many that goe about to deceive, therefore we will neither heare one nor other: or if we heare, wee will believe never a Preacher of them all. This is not the way to keepe our selves from being deceived; no, this is the way to make us a fit prey for seducers to seaze upon: such men as use thus to speake, will heare and believe profane and filthy persons, such as will leade them to lust and lewdnesse, to drunkenesse, and to all excesse of riot, they will heare and believe such as will fill their eares with false tales, and slanderous reports, and poison their hearts with malice against their brethren: but they hold it dangerous to heare and believe such as labour to instruct them in the truth: as if there were no danger of contagion but from them, it is all one as if they should thus speake, There is none more subject to be drawne out of the way, than such as use the best meanes to know the right way: or there is much poison scattered in many places, therefore at any hand take heede of preservatives against it: for what is it but sound knowledge of the truth, gotten by carefull and conscionable attending on the meanes, that will descry the venome of pestilent opinions, and preserve us from infection by them, and make us able to try all things, and to hold that which is good, let us then labour for soundnesse of knowledge.

Objection.

But will some say, alas, I am a poore simple man or woman, who will ever offer to seduce me? Popish inchanters or other seducers will never meddle with me, they will rather deale with such as are eminent in place, or quality, such as be of some note in Church, or common-wealth.

Answer.

Indeede, the Divell will especially labour to corrupt such persons, knowing that their seduction is a matter of consequence, and that it will draw with it many others: yet thou whosoever thou art, be thou never so poore or simple, hast a soule to save, as precious to the Lord, as the soule of the greatest: therefore thou hast just cause to looke to thy selfe, the Divell by his instruments will be tempering with thee, to corrupt thee with error: whom doe lurking corner creepers so much prey upon, as those that be simple? The Apostle saith, 2 Tim. 3. 6. that *deceivers creep into houses, and leade captive simple women, laden with farnes, and led with divers lusts*: Pleade not therefore thy simplicity as sufficient to protect and shield thee from the assault of seducers: but labour thou for soundnesse of knowledge, that thou maist be armed against their detestable errors, and for encouragement remember the comfortable call of wisdom, Prov. 9. 4. *who is simple, let him come hither, &c.*

The next thing wee have here to marke is, that the Apostle saith not, lest any should force, or by violence drive you from this truth: but lest any should beguile you, and under the colour of reason deceive you, and lest any by paralogisme and deceitfull reasoning with you, should draw you to error.

Dott. 2.

In matters of faith and religion there is greater danger from seducement than from violence.

Hence ariseth this conclusion, That in matters of faith we have greater cause to feare deceit and seducement than violence: in matter of Religion there is greater danger of corruption by smooth deceivers, than there is of hurt by open persecutors, 2 Cor. 11. 2. The Apostle saith, in this regard he was jealous over the Corinthians; and verse 3. he feared, *lest as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so their minds should be corrupt from the simplicity that is in Christ*: Hee sheweth the reason of that jealousie and feare, verse 13, 14, 15. because false Apostles were deceitfull workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ: and no marvel, saith the Apostle, for Satan, whose ministers they are, is transformed into an Angell of light: and therefore it is no great thing, though his ministers be so: the reason of the Apostle stands thus, which is also a reason and prooffe of the point in hand.

Reason.

False teachers and deceivers carry before them a semblance, and make shew of

of the truth of religion, of piety and of goodneſſe, and by that meanes doe eaſily get within mens boſomes, and ſeat themſelves upon their hearts without reſiſtance: the opinion that is had of their piety and goodneſſe, gives eaſie paſſage to their coloured poiſon, to enter into the very bowels of mens ſoules; but as for open perſecutors, they have no ſuch advantage; their malice and madneſſe is evident to every man, and may better be avoided; and therefore they are leſſe dangerous than cunning deceivers. It is a maxime and knowne truth, taught by common experience, that a kiſſing and embracing enemy, is farre more dangerous than a threatening, open, and profeſſed foe: the Scripture is full of examples of this kinde, *Iſaiah*, 2 Sam. 20. 9. *Judas*, and many others.

Now this bring ſo, that in matters of Religion, there is greater danger of corruption from ſeducers, than of hurt by open perſecutors. It muſt teach us to be moſt wary that the Peſtilent breath of deceivers never infect us. Let us keepe our eares from harkening to their ſmooth perſwaſions, as wee would refrain from one that had ſome infectious diſeaſe upon him, and let us follow the counſell of our Saviour, *Matth.* 7. 15. *Beware of falſe Prophets, which come to you in ſheepes cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

How ſhall wee know falſe teachers?

Our Saviour hath taught us in the next verſe, *ye ſhall know them by their fruits.* And that this rule of diſcerning falſe teachers be not miſtaken, as it is of many: we muſt know the proper fruit of a Prophet or Teacher. As he is a Prophet, it is his doctrine, it is not his life and converſation, for that may deceive us: if *Saint Paul* a perſecutor was unblameable touching the righteouſneſſe which is in the Law, *Philip* 3. 6. and he demeaned himſelfe, ſo as no man could juſtly taxe him; then doubtleſſe a deceiver, (who puts on a vizard of holineſſe, of purpoſe to deceive) may ſeeme to us to excell in holineſſe, If we judge of him by that appearance, wee may be deceived: it is therefore the proper fruit of a Prophet, as hee is a Prophet, namely, his doctrine, by which wee are to judge of him. And this is cleare by the like ſpeech, *Luk.* 6. 44. every tree is known by his fruit, if then the doctrine be good, the teacher (as he is a teacher) is good, for he muſt not onely be a teacher, but a pattern of good works, with uncorrupt doctrine, with gravity and integrity, *Tir.* 2. 7. If then we would know a true teacher from a falſe, let us looke to his doctrine, and as *Saint Iohn* ſaith, 1 *Epist.* 4. 1. *try the ſpirits*, that is, the doctrines of men, if we find them conſonant and conſenting with the Word of God, founded on *Jeſus Chriſt* incarnate, and propounding ſpiritual worſhip of God, agreeable to his will and nature: then is the teacher a true teacher; but if otherwiſe we find his doctrine, either diſſenting from the Word, or not grounded on *Jeſus Chriſt* incarnate, or (as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Gal.* 6. 12.) making a faire ſhew in the fleſh; then let us take heed of him, and not ſuffer ſuch an one to diſgorge his venome into our boſomes; there is greater danger from him, than from an open and profeſſed enemy of Religion: and that we may yet further ſee the danger that comes by deceivers, conſider we this one thing:

Hee that is violently forced, and by terror overcome, and by extremity of tortures and paine made to deny the knowne truth, finnes greatly, yet he may retaine the knowledge of the truth, and afterwards hee may repent and riſe againe, and come to confeſſe it: but hee that is drawne away by impoſters and deceit, not onely falls from the confeſſion of the truth, but loſeth the knowledge of the truth, and embraceth error inſtead of truth, and at length comes to this, that the truth hee before loved and confeſſed, hee now hates, and doth perſecute with bitter enmity and oppoſitions againſt it. Examples of this kinde wee have in Scripture, as *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, *Harmogenes* and *Alexander* the copper-smith.

Let this then admoniſh us to take more than ordinary heed of deceivers: and in that deceivers are ſo dangerous, we are to thinke upon it further, and it muſt

Verſe 1.

We muſt warily avoyd the peſtilent breath of deceivers in matters of religion.

Obiect.

Answer.

Note.

Verſe 2.

We must warily avoid the infection of deceivers also, in matters of life and manners.

Note.

Quest.
Answer.

teach us most warily to avoid the infection of deceivers not onely in matters of faith, but in matters of life and manners: for (doubtlesse) as *Salomon* saith, *Pro. 11. 9.* An hypocrite with his mouth hurts his neighbour; he doth not only corrupt his mind with erroneous opinions, but many times stirre up his heart to sinfull lusts, and pervert his waies to ungodly behaviour. In plaine termes, we are most heedfully and warily to avoid such as perswade us to any sinne, under colour of pleasure, profit or preferment, and so seeke to beguile us: they are more dangerous enemies of our soules, than such as goe about to force us to sinne, and we are in speciall manner to take heed of our owne inborne beguiling enemy, I meane our naturall corruption, the serpent that lies in our owne bosome, that is a deceiving enemy, the greatest enemy we have, even greater than the divell, though he be a seducer to sinne: the Divell could never prevaile to bring us to any sinne but by meanes of that. It may seeme strange that any man should play the Sophister with himselfe: yet thus men doe, by meanes of their owne inborne corruption: for example, such as are onely hearers of the Word, and not doers of it, they through their owne corruption thinke all is well enough with them, and so play the Sophisters with themselves, *Iam. 1. 22.* *Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers onely, deceiving your owne soules:* this beguiling enemy (our owne corruption) makes men many times thinke they have faith, when indeed it is nothing but pride and presumption: and that they repent, when it is nothing but a deceitfull counterfeiting, and hypocrisie: we must therefore especially take heed of this beguiling dangerous enemy.

Some may say, how is that to be done?

I answer, first, together with the examination of our owne hearts, with a search made to finde out the depth and deceit of our owne corruption, we are to pray for strength of grace against it, and never rest till we receive the Lords answer to *Paul*, *2 Cor. 12. 9.* *my grace is sufficient for thee.*

Secondly, wee are to carry and cherish in our hearts an universall hatred of all and every sinne, *Psalm. 119. 128.* *I esteeme all thy precepts most just, and hate all false waies:* and not to give liberty to our owne corruption, to breake out into any knowne sinne: we cannot but sinne as long as wee are in this life, but let it be against our purpose. And if we thus search and finde out our owne corruption, and be instant with the Lord for strength of grace against it, and carry in us an universall hatred of every knowne sinne, wee shall be able (in some measure) to decline the deceite of our beguiling corruption.

Come wee to the manner and meanes whereby false teachers use to deceive, in the words following [*with enticing words*] That which is offered unto us from hence, is this:

Dott. 3.
False teachers for the most part have sweet tongues.

Reason.

That false teachers have for the most part sweet tongues, as the Lord saith by his Prophet, *Jer. 23. 31, 32.* *Behold, I will come against the Prophets, saith the Lord, which have sweet tongues, &c.* Deceivers commonly bring probable reasons and perswasive arguments; and as the Apostle saith, *Rom. 16. 18.* *With faire speech they deceive the simple:* and the reason of this is,

Because the Divell knowes the force of this weapon, the power of a flattering perswasive speech: he used it himselfe in his first tentation, *ye shall be as Gods, &c.* and prevailed: therefore he sends forth his ministers furnished with this power, that as true Teachers come in the evidence of the Spirit of God; so false teachers in demonstration of the spirit of Satan, with all deceiveablenesse both of word and deed.

This may serve not onely to let us see whence it is that many at this day are deceived by Popish seducers, because they come provided with enticing and glosing speeches, and have taught their tongues to speake lies, &c. *Jerem. 9. 5.* And under glorious titles of Church, of Councils, Fathers, Antiquity, Consent, &c. have insnared many a simple soule: but it serves also to teach us, not to esteeme

Vse.
We are not to esteeme of any speech in matters of faith, by the outward habite and forme of words.

steeme of any speech especially in matters of faith, by the outward habite and forme of words, and as it is clothed with likelihood or probability, for so wee may be deceived: For example, when the Papists say, it is not likely that our provident Saviour Jesus Christ, in the institution of the Sacrament of his Supper, would deliver it in obscure and ambiguous termes, because that might cause much strife and contention, and the mistaking of it might breed Idolatry, that wee should worship for Christ, that which is not Christ; or impiety, that wee should not give to it, (being Christ, God, and man) divine honour: here is a probable speech, but indeed no truth in it, if wee looke beyond the probability of it: for Christ did not deliver his mind in the institution of the Sacrament, in obscure termes, but after the manner of the Scripture, in such termes as was usuall and common to Sacraments, as might be proved. Againe, their inference, (that the mistaking of it might breed Idolatry) is grounded on a meere device of their owne: for there is no worship due to the Sacrament, and so no danger of Idolatry. Thus then wee see we are not to esteeme of any speech by the likelihood of it, but we are to examine the substance of it: yea, let us never measure any doctrine by the outward manner of delivering of it: it is just with the Lord to make such as heare men in respect of eloquence and outward ornaments, to heare without profit, because they depend upon the wit of men, and not upon the wisdom of God, who onely doth *create the fruit of the lips to be peace*, Esa. 57. 19. a speech worthy marking: it is as proper to the Lord to give peace and comfort by the speech of man, as to give being and forme to a creature; and therefore as man is not able to doe the one, no more can hee doe the other: so it is just with the Lord to let them heare without profit, who depend upon the wit and eloquence of man.

Verse 5. *For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the Spirit rejoicing and beholding your order, and your stedfast faith in Christ.*

THis verse dependeth on the former, as a reason of the Apostles care, expressed in the former verse, that the Colossians might be kept from the seducement of such as should goe about to beguile them with enticing words: the reason is this, because the Apostle was acquainted with the state and condition of their Church; and this reason is couched together with an answer to a question they might make, how hee should come to the knowledge of their state being absent, and farre removed from them? to this the Apostle answers, that though he was absent in the flesh, yet was he with them in the Spirit, rejoicing and beholding their order, and their stedfast faith in Christ.

This is the summe and substance of this verse: in it we have more particularly these things to consider.

First, a prevention of a question that might be made by the Colossians, how possibly the Apostle could come to be acquainted with their estate, seeing hee was absent from them. This the Apostle meets withall in the first words by a distinction, that his absence was in regard of his body, and not of his spirit, [*Though I be absent in the flesh, &c.*] Now because there might yet remaine some scruple and doubt in the minds of the Colossians, admitting his presence with them in the spirit, for that might be without knowledge of their estate (as a man may be with his friends farre distant from him, in conceit, in mind, and good will, and yet be ignorant of their estate and welfare.) The Apostle therefore in the second place sets downe the effect of his presence in the spirit with the Colossians, to prove that he was present with them, not in bare conceit and minde, but so, as he was acquainted with their estate; as namely, that it brought forth joy and rejoicing, and that is further amplified by the meanes whereby that rejoicing was wrought, namely, by sight, and not by heare-say, *rejoicing and beholding*, which

which doth also prove the truth of his presence with them in the spirit, that he was so present that he did looke on them, as if he had beene bodily present; and that his beholding of them is farther enlarged by the matter and object of it, and that twofold: beholding their order and stedfast faith in Christ, that he (seeing their order and their stedfast faith in Christ) rejoyced. Now before wee come to handle the parts of this verse in particular, one thing of good use and consequence is to be observed from it in generall: Wee are to marke that this verse is inferd upon the former, as a reason of the Apostles care, expressed in the former verse. He was carefull that none should beguile them, Why so? because hee was present with them in his spirit, and saw their good order and stedfast faith in Christ: that reason is to be marked: a man would thinke hee should rather have thus reasoned, I am with you in spirit, and I see some goe about to beguile you; therefore I am carefull that no man beguile you: but hee saith not so: but I see your good order, therefore I am carefull that no man seduce you: from this manner of reasoning we may take out this profitable lesson.

Doff. 1.
When wee thinke our selves most free from danger of temptation, then are we to be vigilant and wary, and to watch over our owne hearts and lives.

Note.

Vse
The duty urged by an argument from Satans subtilty in tempting us to sin.

That in our best estate, when wee thinke our selves most free from danger of temptation, yea, when we find our selves most strong by the strength of grace and faith to withstand the assaults and tentations of Satan, or his instruments, labouring to beguile us, and to draw us to error in judgement, to lust of heart, or to any sinfull action; even then are we to be vigilant, circumspect and wary, and to watch over our owne hearts and lives. The Apostle was carefull to keepe the Colossians from seducement, when he knew them wel ordred & sted fast in faith: so must we in our best and most secure estate (as it may seeme to us) feare, and be carefull to avoid the danger of temptation. The Apostle saith to such as stand by faith, *be not high minded but feare*, Ro. 11. 20. and, *let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall*, 1 Cor. 10. 12. which places make nothing against assurance of salvation in true believers, as the Papists urge them, but are admonitions to stir them up to use means of securing themselves, by warines, and do prove the point in hand that even then when we stand and are stedfast in faith, wee are with all circumspection to avoid the danger of temptation: if we call to minde the place where, and the time when our first parents were deceived, wee shall easily yeeld to the necessity of this duty. The place where they were tempted, seduced and overthrowne, was Paradise; the time when, in their state of innocency.

Now let no man upon this conclude: therefore sinfull men (though they be true believers) may wholly and finally fall from God: for there is not the same reason of the grace of creation, and the grace of regeneration: by the grace of creation, man or Angell hath a power either to stand or fall, and this power is in it selfe: but by the grace of regeneration, such feare of God is put into the hearts of the regenerate, that they shall not wholly fall from God, Ier. 32. 40. and this power of not falling from God is in them indeed, but not from themselves: (but that by the way.) In that our first parents were tempted and fell in Paradise, in time of their innocency, it makes it most cleare (which is the intention of my speech) that in our best estate we are not to be secure and thinke our selves free, (I say not from temptation) but from the danger of temptation; and therefore in our best estate, when wee have most strength of grace, we are to be vigilant and to watch over our selves, lest Satan circumvent us. We see our duty: and (that it may be thought upon with profit) we must know, that when Satan cannot prevaile with us to make us commit grosse sins, when (we having strength of grace to withstand him) he cannot make us to sin by swearing, drunkenness, pride in apparell, or other like fruits of ignorance, and of an unreformed soule; then hee wil assaile us with some spirituall temptation: For example, he wil seeke to poison our soules with inward pride, to make us (if possibly he can) to swell, and to be lifted up in regard of that very grace given to withstand temptation, we therefore (even as many as make conscience of knowne sins) are to watch over our hearts in this respect

respect, lest Satan get within our hearts, and by his subtilty (ere wee be aware) corrupt them, with this secret pride, and consider, that it is not enough for us to disallow this corruption: as haply at the hearing of this exhortation, some will say; Oh, God forbid I should so forget my selfe, as to thinke highly of that strength God hath given mee, and to be lift up with a conceit of that; I know it to be a sin, and I utterly disallow it: consider (I say) that this is not sufficient, the Divell will suffer us to goe thus farre: as in judgement wee disallow it, so in affection we must humble our selves in feare and prayer before the Lord, knowing this, that at one time or other, we may be tempted and solicited by Satan to this sinne of secret pride, and if in judgement onely we disallow it, and be not humbled in feare and prayer against it, wee shall not be able to stand in time of temptation; our Saviour therefore hath taught us, and he often repeates it, that we are to watch and pray, that wee fall not into temptation; It is worth our marking, that he saith, Mark. 13. 33. Take heed or looke, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is; as if he had said, it is not enough for you to looke about you, to espie this or that sinne, but you are to watch over your selves in regard of temptation to it, yea to be humbled in feare and prayer, that you may be strengthened against it.

Come we to the particular parts of this verse, and first of the prevention of the question, the Colossians might make in these words, *though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the Spirit*: by the word *flesh*, we are to understand his body, as appears plainly, 1 Cor. 5. 3. and by the word *spirit*, the mind, and that not in substance, or any essentiall faculty, but in act or operation of his minde, the apprehension or vision of his minde, and that in truth, not in phantasie, his minde being enabled by the Spirit of God, truly to see and behold the state of the Colossians: Thus then these words are to be conceived, *Though I be absent from you in my body, yet am I present with you in the apprehension and vision of my minde, enabled by the Spirit of God, truly to see and behold your state.*

Many things might hence with profit be noted, but that which I will insist upon is this: hence it is cleare, that a mans body and his minde, in regard of the apprehension, cogitation and thought of it, may be farre dis-joyned; the body may be in one place, and the mind in another; the Apostle in his body was at Rome, in his mind with the Colossians: our owne experience teacheth this, we can witness it, that our bodies are sometimes in one place, when our mindes are in another: if we desire proove by plaine Text of Scripture, Isa. 29. 13. *This people saith the Lord, come weere unto mee with their mouth, and bowe our mee with their lips, but have removed their heart farre from mee.* Again, Ezech. 33. 31. the Lord saith, the people come as they use to come, and sit before the Prophet, and heard his words, but would not doe them, for with their mouthes they made iests, and their hearts were wandring after their covetousnesse, their mindes were upon their profits in the world.

Wee see then the truth of this, that the thought of the minde and the body may be, and are sometime farre dis-joyned. Wee are therefore to take heede that our mindes, when they are sent out of our bodies, be well bestowed, that they doe not straggle and wander out into filthy lusts, and proud imaginations, to thinke of new fashions, to bitter grudging, or into idle, vaine, and foolish conceits, it is accounted by many for a part of mans liberty, that thought is free, but they that take that liberty, are brought into most grievous slavery, and become slaves to their owne wicked thoughts, and vassals to the Divell: we must remember to bestow our mindes well, when they are sent out of our bodies, in the cogitations of them, and especially in the actions of religion & divine worship; as in hearing the Word, in prayer, &c. In hearing the Word, wee are to looke that our thoughts be spent upon the Word delivered. In prayer, that our mindes be

Interpretation.

Doctr. 2.

A mans body and his mind in respect of the apprehension & thought of it may be farre dis-joyned one from the other.

Wf.

When our mindes are sent out of our bodies, in the thoughts of them they are to be well bestowed.

be lift up to heaven, and wholly exercised in thinking on the goodnesse, mercy, truth, might, power and maiesty of the Lord, to whom we pray: so hath our Saviour taught us to say, *Our Father which art in heaven, &c.* And it is *Salomons* reason, Eccles. 5. 1. that we should not be rash with our mouths, nor that our hearts should be hasty to utter a thing before God: Why? because God is in heaven, and we are on earth: therefore in prayer wee are to lift up our hearts, and to spend our thoughts wholly in thinking on the power, goodnesse, mercy, truth and glorious maiesty of the Lord. Now in this duty many are much defective, and many of us in time of prayer, rather thinke of any thing, than of the mighty power and maiesty of him before whom we stand; wee gaze here and there, we note this man, that woman, their gesture, their apparell, yea, the least toy that is about them, or else our mindes are wandring after our pleasures, or profits abroad: our owne hearts can tell us, that thus it is with many of us: and this being so, wee must know it is ill with the Lord to cast out our petitions, and to returne our prayers empty unto us againe: yea, to send them backe with a curse in stead of a blessing, they are abominable to the Lord, as he himselfe hath said, Isa. 1. 13. *Incense is an abomination unto me, &c.* Why was Incense an abomination to the Lord? surely, because such as offered it, did not offer it with inward truth of a sound heart: so if our prayers be offered to God, and our thoughts be carryed cleane away from him, they are abominable to him, and the sacrifice of fooles. Let us then labor in hearing the word, in prayer, and in other holy exercises, to set our selves in the presence of God, to thinke upon his glorious maiesty, and remember withall Gods house is his Chamber of presence, wherein we offer and present our soules and the secrets of our hearts to be seene and censured of the Lord.

Come wee now to the effect of the Apostles presence with the Colossians, whereby he proves that he was present with them in spirit, namely his reioycing: the word (*reioycing*) is here to be taken in the naturall and proper signification of it: that his heart was affected with ioy and comfort, in regard of the good order he saw among the Colossians. Wee are to consider this effect together with the present state of the Apostle, he was then absent in body from the Colossians, yea, his body was held from them in prison at Rome: when he thus reioyced for their good order and stedfast faith, he was then in his owne body afflicted, when his heart was thus affected with ioy for the good of the Colossians. This considered, the point of instruction arising from hence is this, That wee are not to suffer our soules (as it were) to be drowned in our owne sense and feeling, either of good or evill. Our affections of ioy and sorrow (for it is true in both) are not to be kept within compasse of that we feele, in, or upon our selves, but our hearts are to be resolved, and further to breake out either in ioy or sorrow, as occasion is offered from the Church, and people of God: we are (after the example of the Apostle) even then when our selves are afflicted, to ioy and reioyce at the hearing, or sight of Gods mercy, and blessing upon his Church and people: and againe, when our owne estate is prosperous, even then to sorrow and be grieved for the affliction and misery of the Church and people of God. Wee see the first of these proved in the example of the Apostle in this place: and againe, 1 Thes. 7. 8. 9. he saith, when he heard *good tidings of the faith* and love of the Thessalonians, that he *had consolation in all his affliction and necessity*: that he was alive if they stood fast in the Lord, that he could not render due thanks to God, for all the ioy wherewith he reioyced for their sakes before God.

For prooffe of the second, that when we enioy health and prosperity, we are to sorrow and to be grieved for the affliction and trouble of the Church & people of God, which we either see or heare of. Excellent and memorable is the example of *Nebemiah*, chap. 1. 4. though he (for his owne particular) was in health, and high place, much favoured of the King, yet when he heard of the affliction and

Doff. 3.

Our joy and our sorrow are not to be kept within compasse of that we feele in or upō our selves, but our hearts are to reioyce or to be grieved, as occasion is offered frō the church of God.

and distresse of Ierusalem, he saith he sat downe and wept, and mourned certaine dayes, and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven, yea, hee could not smother or dissemble his griefe, it appeared in his face, insomuch as the king perceived it, and demanded of him why his countenance was sad, chap. 2. 2. Adde to this that of *Daniel*, who though himselfe was in great honour and estimation, preferd above all the Princes of Persia, and second to the King, yet in the midst of his prosperity (when hee saw the captivity still continued, Gods worship decayed, Gods people oppressed) his heart was heavy, his soule melted within him, and hee humbled his soule with fasting and prayer: and thus wee see it made cleere unto us, by the example of such as are guided by the spirit of God that our affections of ioy and sorrow are to bee tempered, not onely according to the sense of good or evill upon our selves, but as an occasion is offered from the Church of God.

And the reason of this may bee taken from that sympathy and fellow-feeling one member hath of the suffering, or honour of another, laid downe by the Apostle, 1 Cor. 22. 26. *If one member suffer, all suffer with it: if one member bee had in honour, all the members reioyce with it.* Now if many members suffer, or reioyce with one, according to the state and condition of it; then surely must one member suffer with many, though it selfe be honoured, and it must reioyce with many, though it selfe be afflicted. And this doth convince those of sinne, whose hearts are either dilated, and lift up with ioy, or contracted and depressed with griefe, as they feele either good or evill of themselves, and never regard the prosperity, or affliction of the Church of God.

It is a true signe of a sanctified heart, and of a heart that hath fellowship with the Church and people of God, to reioyce for the good of the Church, when wee our selves are afflicted: and to be grieved for the affliction of the Church, when we have all things at will: yea, it is an infallible signe of our true love to Gods glory: if (when our estate is prosperous) we can grieve for the troubles of the Church, heard of, or seene: but if our hearts be so taken up with the consideration of our owne prosperity, that sorrow for the affliction of the Church cannot enter; and if wee cannot more sorrow in the sorrow of the Church, than reioyce in our owne ioy, we have cause to feare that our hearts are not rightly affected to Gods glory. And to descend to some particular, let us in this respect examine our owne hearts, how they stand affected in regard of the present dearth, and scarcity (now begun amongst us, and further to bee feared) haply many of us having better meanes than others, are not hitherto pinched with it, onely thus farre that wee live at greater charge than heretofore wee did: but we are not so neerely touched with it as the poorer sort, who double lesse feele the smart of it. Now let us examine whether wee bee any thing grieved beyond that wee feele, or beyond that we feare to come upon our selves, whether wee have in us *Iobs* affection, *Iob* chap. 30. verf. 25. whether wee now weepe with them that are already in trouble, whether our soules bee now in heaviness for the poore already pinched: come to the tryall and duly examine the matter, wee shall finde our selves farre short of this affection. Doe not wee still continue our vanities, and superfluities, our great excessse in our feasting, wherein every one makes a feast like to that of *Nabal*, 1 Sam. chap. 25. verf. 36. What shall I say of that brutish firme of drunkenness, to which some still cleave so fast, as nothing can remove them from delighting in it, till the meanes (whereby it is fostered) bee violently taken from them, as the Lord threatneth, *Iosh* chap. 1. verf. 5. *Awake ye drunkards, and weepe and howle all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine: for it shall bee pulled from your mouth.* Doe not these things witnesse against us, and make it most cleere to the world, and to our owne soules, that we are far from fellow-feeling, and fellow-grieving for the afflictions of our poore brethren? Nay, doe they not make it knowne

Reason.

Vse.

Reproofe of such as either reioyce or are grieved as they feele either good or evill on themselves, and never regard the prosperity or affliction of Gods Church.

Note.

knowne that we are ſuch as ſtand at defiance with the Lord; and that wee dare confront him and juſtly at his iudgements, and feare not to ruſh on that woe, *Iſai. 5. 11. 12.* Well, let us in the feare of God be admoniſhed to take heede of this ſtanding out with the Lord; doe we provoke him to anger, and not bring confuſion upon our ſelves? Let us remember that though wee feele not the ſmart of this famine, yet wee are to bee touched with grieve and ſorrow for the diſtreſſe of our poore brethren in this kinde, and in teſtimony of our true touch of heart for them, to abridge our ſelves of that variety, that exceſſe and ſuperfluity in dyet, we were wont to uſe. Riot and exceſſe in eating and drinking is a grievous ſinne at all times, but now it is a crimſon ſinne, a ſinne of a double dye, becauſe the Lord doth call in ſpeciall manner to moderation. Marke how the Prophet ſets out the ſinne of the people of his time, by this very circumſtance, *Iſai. 22. 12.* *In that day when the Lord God of hoſtes did call unto weeping and mourning, and to baldneſſe, and to girding with ſackcloth, in that very day there was ioy and gladneſſe, ſlaying oxen, and killing ſheepe, eating fleſh, and drinking wine:* ſo if we now give our ſelves to exceſſive eating and drinking, it is a farre greater ſinne than it is at other times.

Doct. 4.
Paul had Gods ſpirit in extraordinary manner, and could diſcerne the ſtate of particular perſons, and might pray againſt particular perſons.

Uſe
We being but ordinary men, and endued with ordinary gifts, may not doe as Paul did.

Doct. 5.
It is a great comfort to the godly to ſee others well ordered and truly religious.

Reason. 1.

Reason. 2.

Reason. 3.

Uſe.
Such as cannot abide them that feare God, but hate them and reproach them, are farre from the mind and ſpirit of Gods children.

It followeth, [*beholding your order*] The Apoſtle was enabled by the ſpirit of God in truth and not in phantaſy, to behold the ſtate of the Coloſſians. Whence firſt wee may note, That the Apoſtle had the Spirit of God in extraordinary manner, even to let him ſee the ſtate of Churches farre removed from him, yea hee had the ſpirit of diſcerning, to know the ſtate of particular perſons, and ſo might lawfully pray againſt particular perſons, as he did againſt *Alexander the Copper Smith*, *2 Tim. 4. 14.* becauſe hee was able to diſcerne who were incurable enemies of God and who were not, and was carryed with a pure zeale to Gods glory, not mixed with hatred, or corrupt deſire of revenge. Thus may not we doe, being but ordinary men, and endued with ordinary gifts: wee may pray againſt the bad cauſe the wicked enemies of God maintaine, ſimply, and abſolutely, but againſt their perſons with this condition, if otherwiſe the good eſtate of the Church cannot continue, or Religion be preſerved.

We are further to marke, that the Apoſtle ſaith, hee beholding the good order among the Coloſſians, reioyced. Hence we may gather, that it is a matter of great comfort to the godly minded, to ſee others well ordered, and ſtedfaſt in the faith, fearing God, and religious. *David ſaith, He reioyced when they ſaid unto him, they would goe into the houſe of the Lord*, *Pſal. 122. 1.* It did him good at the heart, to ſee others forward in the ſervice of God: and there bee many reaſons why the godly minded doe reioyce to ſee others fearing God, and religious.

Firſt, becauſe they love God, and thinke all too little that is done in his ſervice: therefore they reioyce when they have helpers, and ſuch as will ioyne with them in that ſervice.

Secondly, becauſe they love the Church of God they are glad when they ſee that number increaſed.

Thirdly, becauſe they know ſuch as feare God, will love them, and uſe all good behaviour toward them, as the ſaying is, Like will to like, and uſe all kindeſſe one to another: therefore the godly minded reioyce when they ſee others renewed according to the image of God like to themſelves.

This being ſo, it is a cleere caſe on the contrary, that ſuch as are grieved and pine at them that feare God, and cannot abide them, (as the faſhion of ſome is in this wicked age) ſuch as ſpare not to break out and to load them with ſomefull and opprobrious termes, thoſe are farre off from the minde and ſpirit of Gods children: yea, they ſhew themſelves to beare the image of wicked *Kain*, who ſlew his brother: and why? *Becauſe* (ſaith *John*, *1 Epiſt. 3. 12.*) *his owne workes were evill, and his brothers good*: yea, they beare the expreſſe image of the

the Divell himfelfe, who no fooner faw the image of God imprinted in man, but he fought to deface it. It is made a note of him that fhall dwell in the Lords Tabernacle, and reft in his holy mountaine, that hee *honoureth them that feare the Lord*, Pfal. 15. 4. and on the contrary, it muft needs fall hevie on fuch as hate them, and repine at them, that is a figne they fhall never dwell in the Lords Tabernacle, but fhall be caft out of his prefence for ever. And this ought to ffitte us up to be glad and rejoyce, yea, to take much delight in feeing others religious and fearing God, and to honour them, and to make much of them. It is a fure figne that grace is truly wrought in our owne hearts, when wee from the heart delight to fee the image of it in others. The particular things the Apoftle faw with joy among the Coloffians, are expreffed in the laft words [*your order, and ftedfaft faith in Chrift* :] by the word (*order*) wee are to underftand the manner of government Ecclefiaticall, that was amongst the Coloffians, the good order they held and kept in the regiment of their Church, together with the vigilancie, care and diligence of all men in their feverall orders and degrees amongst them: that all and every one was carefull to doe his duty in his place and calling: that I gather from the contrary expreffed by the Apoftle, 2 Thef. 3. 11. there are fome which walke among you (*ἀνέλκοντες*) inordinately, contrary to *ἐνταξιν*, or *ἐντάξει*, good order: and the Apoftle explaines himfelfe in the words following, *they worke not at all*, they are negligent, idle, and bufi-bodies, meddling in matters that concerne them not, as the Apoftle faith of idle houfe-wives, they goe about from houfe to houfe, yea, they are not onely idle, but alfo praters and bufi-bodies, &c. 1 Tim. 5. 13. This then is the meaning of the Apoftle, that hee in fpirit faw the good government of their Church, and the vigilancy, care and diligence of every one in his owne place and calling. Firft, let it be here obferved, that the Apoftle looking on the Ecclefiaticall order, and Church government that was amongst the Coloffians, and feeing that to be good hee rejoyced.

Interpretation.

Hence we may gather by implication on the contrary, that the beholding of bad Church-government, or of fome defect in it, is to worke in fuch as are godly minded, a griefe, and sorrow of heart, a mourning for that want: for that there is warrant, both by rule and example in the Word of God, I might fhew it more at large: but for that very caufe, becaufe there be defects in the government of the Church, to make feparation from the Church, I fee no fufficient ground for that. This is the cafe of the feparatifts at this day, who becaufe they conceive fome defect in the government of our Church, therefore rend themfelves off, and make a feparation from us.

Doff. 6.
Church government being feene to be defective, ought to affect the godly minded with griefe and sorrow, but it is no fufficient caufe of feparation.

I know they alledge that our Church is Antichriftian, and therefore they ought not to communicate with us, but to come out from among us, according to the rule of the Apoftle, 2 Cor. 6. 17. But indeed it is more than they are able to prove: if they hold our Church to be Antichriftian, then muft it needs be fuch a Church as makes fhew of profefling Chrift, and yet is an enemy to Chrift in fundamentall points of religion: for fo doth Antichrift, and all his adherents. Now this they are never able to prove. It is a thing to be confidered, that our Church hath the fame government, and holdeth the fame fundamentall points of Religion, that the Church did in the time of King Edward the fixth: and many that then lived, afterward fuffered in Queene Maries time, and are accounted Martyrs by the feparatifts themfelves: now no member of an Antichriftian Church can truly be called a Martyr, for a Martyr is a witneffe of the truth, and therefore doubtlefle our Church is a true Church of God. I could wifh that this might be duly confidered by the feparatifts, and fuch as encline to feparation.

Ufe.
Confutation of the Separatifts of our time.

Obiect.

Anfw.

Let this be further obferved, that one particular thing feene by the Apoftle among the Coloffians that gave him contentment, and that hee faw with much

delight and with reioycing, was the care and diligence of all orders, and degrees amongst them, that every man walked orderly and diligently in his place and calling.

Dott. 7.
Diligence and orderly walking in our particular calling is pleasing to God, and to all good men.

Hence it is cleere that diligence and orderly walking in a mans place and calling, is a thing both pleasing to God (for it is agreeable to his commandement) and a thing also pleasing and delightfome to good men, it doth minister unto them matter of ioy and reioycing, they delight to see it: wee may observe that *David*, Psalm. 122: reioyced not onely to see that God had accomplished his promise, and placed his Arke in Sion, but that there was good order in the city of Jerusalem, there was carefull and conscionable execution of Justice, and Judgement: vers. 5. there were thrones set for Judgement, even the thrones of the house of *David*: it did glad *David*'s heart to see thrones of Justice erected, and Iudges and other Officers carefully executing their office and function. The reasons of it are these.

Reason 1.

First good men, such as feare God, they know that God hath set a comely order of the societies of mankind, both in Church and Common-wealth, that every one should be serviceable to others: which order is preserved and upheld by carefull and diligent performance of duties in the severall places and callings of men, and is interrupted and broken by the contrary, by sloth and negligence: therefore they much reioyce to see men diligent and painfull in their places and callings.

Reason 2.

Againe, good men know that carefull walking in a mans place and calling, in conscience to Gods Commandement, is a certaine marke of the feare of God: for the feare of God workes in men obedience to the Word, and the Word teacheth every man to walke carefully in his place and calling: therefore they reioyce to see men to walking, and so expressing the feare of God in their lives. Wee see then the truth of this, that diligent and orderly walking in a mans place and calling, is a thing that drawes from good men good liking, and doth minister unto them matter of reioycing.

Vse 1.
If wee would gaine the good liking and approbation of good men, we must walke diligently & orderly in our severall callings.

Would wee then by good meanes gaine the good liking and approbation of good men, which is a thing to be thought on, as the Apostle teacheth, Philip. 4. vers. 8. *A good man is much to be sought after*, Prov. 22. 1. And that indeed is a good name when men heare well for good things, and of good men: it is no true honour to be magnified of a multitude, and applauded of never so many wicked men. Would wee by good meanes have the good liking of good men, and doe that which may minister unto them matter of ioy? let us then looke that wee walke diligently and orderly in our severall places and callings.

Objection.

Haply some will say, this is a needlesse and unseasonable exhortation, wee are well ordered in this respect, we are such as walke painfully in our places and callings. Indeed it cannot be denied, but that some are diligent and painfull in their places, they rise early, and eate the bread of carefulnesse, I hope in conscience to Gods commandement: but be there none that live inordinately? I wish it were so: but I may not iustifie the wicked, I must needs tell you, there be many that cannot wash their hands and cleare themselves of this sinne of inordinate walking: Are there not many that spend many daies from morning to night in the Taverne, or on the Ale-bench? Is the number small of such as are common gadders to stage-playes? doe not troopes and multitudes flocke under those banners displayed by the Divell? and if this be not to be disordered, and to live inordinately, I know not what it is. And since I have begun to discover this sinne of running to stage-playes; let mee a little further in compassion to such as are guilty of this sinne, make knowne the greatnesse and danger of it, and to this purpose consider we these three things.

Answer.

The danger of that sin of going to stage-playes.

First, diligent and orderly walking in a mans place, (as we have heard) makes the heart of good men, reioyce: and on the contrary, to see men walking inordinately,

dinately, must needs grieve the hearts, and vex the soules of good men, and that is a thing not lightly to be regarded. It was no small matter when the Lord told *Zenachib* that *Sion* despised him, and laughed him to scorne, *Isai.* 37. 22. so it is no light matter when the godly minded are justly grieved: marke what the Apostle saith, *1 Pet.* 4. 14. if such as belong to *Christ* be railed on; that railing reacheth even to the spirit of glory that resteth on them: so if men by disorder grieve the godly minded, they grieve not them alone, but the spirit that is in them: for they are not grieved, but as they are sanctified by the Spirit of God.

Againe, such as run to these ungodly spectacles, are not only disordered persons themselves (and so a grieve to the godly) but (as farre as in them is) they maintaine disorder and inordinate persons; such are Players, who are not ranged into any lawfull calling, and so partake with them in their sinne, as if they had not sinnes enough of their owne,

Last of all, let them remember what the Wise man saith, *Provi.* 12. 11. *He that followeth the idle, is destitute of understanding*: and where doe men more associate themselves with idle and vaine persons, than at stage-plays? they there joyne with idle and wicked company, and such as by their oathes and blasphemies have made the land to mourne, as saith the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Chap.* 23. verse 10. there commonly they linke to evill company, and evill company corrupts them with ill behaviour, and ill company and ill behaviour brings them into a miserable condition; it strips them not onely of wealth, but of all good understanding, and that being gone, they goe on in a senselesse hardnesse, and see not the Judgements of God over their heads.

If then wee would not justly grieve the godly minded, and in them the Spirit of God; if we would not make our selves guilty of other mens sinnes, besides many of our owne; if wee would not justly be stripped of all good understanding, and so goe on in a senselesse security, to our utter destruction: let as many as are guilty of this sinne, repent, and reforme themselves, and let us all (in the feare of God) be admonished to keepe our feete from running to such ungodly (yea dangerous and damnable) exercises.

Come wee to the next thing which the Apostle saw among the *Colossians*, namely, *their stedfast faith in Christ*: the words are in the originall, the solidnesse, or stedfastnesse of your faith.

Observe wee here that the Apostle ioynes these two together, their good order, and their soundnesse of faith: though faith be first in nature, yet good order in life is first seene, and by that did the Apostle gather the soundnesse of their faith.

Hence wee may conclude, that sound faith and well ordered life ever goe together: howsoever good order, and holinesse of life, be not (as the Papists teach) the forme of faith, nor concurring as a cause in the act of justification in Gods sight, yet is there a necessary concurrence, and coniunction of faith, and good life in the person iustified. The Apostle saith, *Gal.* 5. 6. true faith is ever fruitfull, and working by duties of love in a mans place and calling. Indeed, holinesse of life may be dis-ioyned from popish (catholike) faith, that being but a bare assent to the history of the Gospel (such as is in divels, who beleeve and tremble:) but sound and solid faith in *Christ* for remission of sinnes, and all other blessings, temporall and eternall, cannot chuse but shew it selfe in duties of love, and many good fruits worthy amendment of life.

It is therefore a sophisme, and a deceit of the flesh, helped forward by the subtilty of the Divell, to thinke that true Faith, and disordered life may meete together in one and the same subiect; to thinke (as the most doe) that though they be swaggerers, swearers, &c. yet they have true faith in *Christ*: but can true faith in *Christ* for remission of sinnes, and many sinnes dwell together? It is not possible, they that so thinke, never felt the power of Gods grace and mercy

in Christ, and I dare be bold to tell them, they are yet in their sins, whose hearts are possessed with such deceiving thoughts: and know it for a truth, wee finde it in the Word of truth, 2 Pet. 1. 9. hee that doth not joyne to his faith vertue, and with vertue knowledge, &c. *is blinde and cannot see a farre off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old finnes*: he doth not remember, nor thinke on the power of the blood of Christ, that that is able to wash away the guilt and punishment of his finnes, and to purge out the corruption of sinne: he that is not purged from the corruption of sinne, is not washed from the guiltinesse of sinne.

Wee are further to marke, that the Apostle saith not barely (beholding your faith) but with this addition (your stedfast faith) or as indeed the words are (the solidnesse, soundnesse and firmament of your faith.)

Hence we may take up this conclusion: that true faith in Christ is no windy vanity, no empty, vast, hollow, or hypocriticall semblance or shew, but in what heart soever it is wrought, it hath a true, sound, and solid being: it is as a solid body, without rottennesse, or concavity, without hollownesse, or deceit: Hebrewes 11. 1. it is said to be the *substance*, that is, *the substance or ground of things hoped for*, Hebr. 3. 14. the beginning or foundation wherewith wee are upholden, Hab. 2. 4. this point is made most cleare, by the opposition there made by the Prophet betweene the faith of the iust, and the infidelity of the unjust: the unbelieve of the unjust is compared to a swelling bubble, for the words are, hee that swelleth as a bubble, or the unjust that lifteth up himselfe as a bubble, so as hee seemes as a mighty mountaine, and yet is but as a windy bladder or bubble, his minde is not sound or upright in him: but the iust shall live by his faith: his faith (being no vaine or empty thing) shall uphold him, and minister patience, and true comfort unto him, which is a pregnant prooffe of this, that true faith is no empty shew, but a sound and solid thing.

The reason of this is plaine, because true faith in Christ is a speciall worke of the spirit of God, and therefore it is solid and sound: for all the workes of the spirit are truly, soundly, and substantially wrought. Satan can thrust upon men the counterfeit, the shew, and seeming face of vertue and grace, but not the substance and truth of any grace: if grace be truly wrought in any, it is sound and solid.

Haply some (who do not well conceive the meaning of this conclusion) will desire to be resolved what I meane by a solid faith.

This to some may seeme harsh, and hard to be understood: for their satisfaction, let them know that then faith in Christ is said to be sound and solid, when those things that are essentiall to faith, and of the nature of faith (as knowledge of Christ, and of his benefits, and apprehension and application of the same) concur and meete close together. That is properly said to be a solid body, whose parts are not loose and scattering, as it is in wooll, or the like, but are neerely conioyned, close and compact together, as we see in marble, gold, or such like hard things: so faith in Christ is then indeed a solid faith, when the parts of it (namely knowledge of Christ and of his benefits, and apprehension and application of them) are conioyned, and as it were compact together: when a man doth truly know Christ and his benefits, as hee is revealed unto him in the Word and Sacraments, and doth truly apprehend and apply the same to his owne soule, to his iustification, then is his faith a solid faith, and wheresoever faith is truly wrought in this sense, it is sound and solid.

It may be some will say, there be many doubtings in the mindes even of them that truly believe: therefore true faith (though truly wrought by the spirit of God) hath in it a hollownesse, and is not sound and solid.

To this I answer, that doubtings indeed are in the mindes of true believers, and

Doct. 9.
True faith in Christ is no windy vanity nor emptie shew, but hath a true, sound and solid being.

Reason.

Note.

Quest.

Answer.

Object.

Answer.

and they are and shall bee ever troubled with them : but wee must know that doubtings are not of the nature of faith, they rise from our corruption and infirmity, and doe assault and set upon faith, but they are not in the nature of it : they doe many times much weaken faith, yet not withstanding faith may be still a true, sound, and solid faith ; for we must learne to marke a difference betweene hollow hypocriticall faith, and a weake faith : these two are not both one. A weake faith, a faith much lessened in the measure by diffidence and doubtings, may be for all that a sound and solide faith, it being (as ye have heard) then solid, when there is, though weake, yet a true knowledge and apprehension, and application of Christ, and of his benefits. And thus we see it made cleare, that wheresoever true faith is truly wrought, it hath a sound and solid being ; the things essentiall to faith, as knowledge, apprehension, and application, they meet close together in such a faith.

This doth first discover unto us, that popish iustifying faith is no sound and solid faith. The Papists make it known in their doctrine and writings, that they disclame and renounce particular apprehension and application of Christ, and of his benefits, they publish it to the world that they hold that to bee but an impudent fiction : and what is this, but to let the world see the unsoundnesse, and disioynted loosenesse of their faith ? and their faith is no better than a loose knowledge, or at the most, a bare assent to the truth of the articles of our faith, which may be in very reprobates, yea in the devils themselves : true faith (as I have proved) is absolutely sound and solid, having knowledge, apprehension and application concurring and meeting close together. Now they disioyne these one from the other ; yea they cry shame upon particular application of Christ, and of his benefits ; and therefore there is no soundnesse nor saving substance in popish iustifying faith.

Again, the doctrine delivered makes knowne unto us, that the faith of many amongst us in our Church is no true faith, because the faith of many wants that solid soundnesse that ought to bee in true iustifying faith : for why ? may that in any wise bee called true faith, that comes farre short of the faith of very devils, who beleve and tremble ? without question it may not : and are there not many amongst us, who neither knowes that which the devill beleaves, nor yet (through the hardnesse of their hearts) can tremble at the judgements of God, as hee can ? But (to hold us to the point) doe not the greatest number amongst us rest in their bare knowledge of Christ, and never joyne unto that knowledge any true apprehension, and true application of Christ, and of his benefits to themselves ? I know we are prone to thinke well of our selves, our owne corrupt hearts will flatter us, and tell us that wee joyne to our knowledge, true apprehension and application of Christ, and of his benefits, and therefore have a sound and solid faith, but let us joyne issue and come to the tryall.

There be two speciall things by which wee may truly know, whether wee joyne to our knowledge of Christ, and of his benefits, true apprehension, and application of them or no.

The first is, the proper fruits ever following a iustifying faith ; I say, the proper fruits following it, not such as may bee common to it with nature ; as civill life, just dealing, and the like, (which may be in naturall men and unbelievers) but the proper fruits of it ; as an inward love to God in his word of promise, a feare of God in his word of threatening, a subjection of the heart and life to the will of God revealed, and a continuall lifting up of the heart in prayer and thanksgiving to God : these are the proper fruits that evermore follow a iustifying Faith.

The second is the power of iustifying faith in the time of temptation, that being then as a shield, Ephes. 6. 16. as a breast-plate, 1 The. 5. 8. yea as Saint Iohn

Note.

Vse 1.

Discovery of
Popish iustifying
faith to be
no sound and
solid faith.

Vse 2.

Discovery of
the faith of
many in our
Church to be
no true faith.

Two things
discover whe-
ther we joyne
to our know-
ledge of Christ
and his bene-
fits, true appre-
hension and
application of
them or no.

1

2

faith excellently well, 1 Ioh. 5. 4. *The victory that overcometh the world* it being a notable instrument of the holy Ghost, by which wee withstand the lust of the flesh, the corruption of the world, and the temptation of Satan, and overcome them; or if we be overcome by any temptation, yet it is (by reason of our faith) with much striving and reluctance, even against our best pleasing sinnes: by these two things we may try whether we joyne to the knowledge of Christ, and of his benefits, true apprehension and application of them, or no; and if many of us by these things duly examine our selves, without partiall affection to our selves, we shall finde that we are farre short of a sound and solid faith. Where is that man or that woman, who hath true inward love to God in his Word of promise, and doth truly feare God in his word of threatening, and hath his heart and life subiect to the will of God revealed, and doth continually lift up his heart in prayer, and thanksgiving to God? and where is that man or woman that feels the power of faith in time of temptation effectually to withstand sinne? yea to strive against the best pleasing sinne, and to carry the heart against that sinne, which his heart naturally loveth, liketh, and much affecteth? nay, who is it almost, that is not carryed with the full swinge of his owne heart, and with much pleasure to the committing of his best beloved sinne? It may be there is in a man sometimes a conflict betweene his conscience and affection (which indeed may be in generall and wicked men) but where is he whose heart is carryed against the naturall inclination of it? (for that is a fruit of grace.) I leave it to our owne examination, and this my speech to the blessing of God, and further to be thought on by our selves. And that we may be moved to ioyne to our knowledge of Christ, and of his benefits, not an hollow, but a true apprehension and application of them, (which ever receive strength from Christ, both to accomplish good, and to resist evill) let us remember that nothing but a sound and solid faith shall stand us in stead, at the houre of death, or at the great day of the Lord: let a mans outward and civill carriage be never so excellent: yea, if hee could match the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, (which for outward shew was without any exception) yet if hee have not a righteousness exceeding that, even the righteousness of a sound and solid faith, he can never be saved, Mat. 5. 20.

The next thing we are to mark from the words of the Apostle is, that he set out the solidnesse of the faith of the Colossians, together with the object of it, namely, Christ, *your stedfast faith in Christ*, which phrase cannot with any likelihood at all, be taken for giving credit to the things spoken by, or of Christ, but for iustifying faith.

Hence I will but call to minde a point I have heretofore handled, (it is worthy often to be remembered) namely this:

That true iustifying faith is bounded and set on Iesus Christ onely, hee is the proper object of it, howsoever faith in a generall sence and reference respecteth the whole Word of God, yet as it is an instrument of justification, it beholdeth the speciall mercy of God in Iesus Christ, and doth apprehend and apply Christ and his merits.

Hence it is called the Faith of Iesus, Rom. 3. 26. and this is carefully to be observed, because in this respect onely is faith said to iustifie. Faith doth not iustifie any thing at all as it is a grace wrought in the heart, or for the dignity and worthinesse either of it selfe, or any other action of it: but only by relation to Iesus Christ, because it takes stedfast hold of Christ, and doth truly apprehend and apply his perfect righteousness and merits.

The Church of Rome acknowledgeth faith to iustifie, but how? forsooth as an excellent vertue bringing forth many gracious motions in the heart, as a feare of hell, a love of God, a consideration and desire of life eternall, and so making worthy *ex congruo* (as they speake) to receive grace and justification, which

Deß. 10.
True iustifying faith is bounded and set on Christ Iesus onely.

¶ 11.
Faith as a vertue, or for the dignity either of it selfe, or of any action of it, doth not iustifie.

which is a doctrine devillish and dangerous, and flat contrary to the truth of the word of God, Rom. 3. 27. 28. the Apostle opposeth beleeving, and working, faith, and workes: therefore faith, as a worke or vertue doth not iustifie, for then the Apostles opposition were overthrowne: then beleeving and working might stand together, which are made opposite in the act of iustification in Gods sight.

Againe, this is to be marked of us, that faith doth iustifie onely by relation to Christ to keepe downe this rebelling pride of nature; it is the pride of our corrupt nature, to looke for iustification and salvation by something in our selves. If men live orderly in civill fashion, hurt none, and doe good to many, then they thinke, they cannot chuse but to goe to heaven; thus doth the devill teach them to goe beyond the doctrine of the holy Ghost: he hath taught, that good life and conversation serves as an evidence, and necessary prooffe of faith in the blood of Christ, by whom we are iustified; and the devill he teacheth to advance it higher even to shoulder out Gods grace, and the merits of Christ in our iustification. We must remember what the Apostle hath taught us, Gal. 3. 4. if we looke to be iustified by any thing in our selves, we are abolished from Christ: we must therefore in the case of iustification, cast from us all confidence in any thing that is in our selves; be it faith, or whatsoever it is, iudge our selves, condemne our selves, in regard of any thing in us, and plead nothing but mercy and forgiveness, wee must goe out of our selves, and fixe our faith upon Iesus Christ, and be perswaded in our hearts, that his death is our ranfome, his righteousness, our righteousness: make him our perfect Saviour and Redeemer, and build upon him as a rocke that never can be shaken.

Verf. 6. *As ye have therefore received Christ Iesus the Lord, so walke in him, &c.*

THis verse, together with the seventh, as they have reference to the generall proposition, laid downe verf. 3. that in Christ all things needfull to salvation are to be found: they containe an exhortation to cleave to Christ, as the onely way to life, the onely root and foundation of all true happinesse and comfort; therefore the Apostle saith, Walke in him, root and built in him, and stablished in the faith as yee have beene taught, &c. But as this sixth verse hath more neere connexion with the verse immediately going before, it is inferred upon it as an exhortation to the Colossians, to goe on in Christ as they had begun, both in faith and in good life, expressed in the words [*walke in him*] together with the manner how they were to walke in him, namely, as they had received Christ Iesus, who is further set out by his title *Lord*, and that with an *emphasis*, with addition of the article (*the*) the Lord, or that Lord.

Let us come to examine the words of this verse [*as ye have received Christ*] that is, as yee have beleeved in Christ: for the Apostle having spoken of the sound faith of the Colossians in the verse before, he inferres upon it, *As ye have therefore received Christ Iesus the Lord, so walke in him*: and these two being thus conioyned by the Apostle, we cannot, but understand by receiving Christ, beleeving in him, 1 Cor. 15. 1. 2. we finde them taken promiscuously, in common, as having one sence and signification. In the first verse it is said, *the Gospel which ye have received*, and in the second verse, *except ye have beleeved in vaine*: the Apostle makes them of equall sence and signification [*the Lord*] that is, the onely true Lord, and perfect Saviour, by way of distinction, to put difference betweene the true Christ preached by the Apostle, and a false counterfeit Christ taught by false teachers, [*so walke*] that is, so live: it is a knowne phrase of Scripture to put walking for living, but with this addition, *in him*: it implies thus much, that they should goe on in their faith in Christ, and lead their lives by

Vse 2.

Against the rebelling pride of our nature.

Interpretation.

by faith in him, and by the motion of his spirit according to his will, for that is to walke in Christ, as to walke in the Law and Commandements of God, is to frame the life according to the prescription of his Law and Commandements: thus then these words are to bee conceived, as if the Apostle had said: *As ye have therefore beleaved in Christ Jesus, that only true Lord and perfect Saviour, so goe on in your faith, and live by your faith in him, by the motion of his Spirit according to his will.*

Now from this verse in generall (in that the Apostle doth exhort the Colossians to goe on in faith as they had begun) is offered to our consideration this generall conclusion:

Doftrine 1.
As we have begun in any grace, so are we to goe on in the same.
Reason.

That as we have begun in any grace, be it faith, the feare of God, humiliry, or any other, so are we to goe on in the same: as we grow in yeares, so wee are to grow in grace: the Psalmist saith of such as be planted in the Lords house, they still bring forth fruit in their age, P sal. 92. 14. and there is reason for it.

Because where grace is truly wrought, it extends it selfe not onely to all powers of the soule, but to all the parts of the life, and this is a maine difference betwene grace truly wrought, and the counterfeite shew of it. The one holdeth out and encreaseth; and the other is temporary, and vanishing *as the morning dew*, as the Prophet speakes, Hos. 6. 4. The holy Ghost doth often urge this upon us, that we are to grow in grace, teaching thereby the necessity of this duty; therefore let no man thinke much to heare of it often; for I doe but now remember unto you that which heretofore I have handled at large, and the rather I recall it to mind, because many are much wanting in this duty. As men grow in yeares, so they grow, not in grace, but in love and affection to the things of this world. Who are more ignorant of the things of God, than commonly some of great yeares? who are more covetous than they? who are more averse and backward to every good duty, and every good action? It is needfull then wee should often be put in mind of this, that as we grow in yeares, so we are to grow in grace: therefore to adde something to that which heretofore hath bene said to this purpose; let us first remember what *Salomon* saith, Prou. 16. 31. Age is a crowne of glory, when it is found in the way of righteousness, not when it is begun, but when it is continued in that way, then it is honourable, what is it then, found in the way of sinne? surely farre from honourable; it is then base and contemptible; aged persons found ignorant and sinfull, forfeit and lose the reverence and respect that should be given them amongst men.

Use
Reproofe of such as grow not in grace as they grow in yeares.

Again, let it be thought on, that it is a forfeiture and losse of Gods favour; when aged persons are found in the way of sinne: what they have bene in times past it skills not, if they have bene forward in the feare of God heretofore, and now are wholly fallen away, and with *Demas*, embrace this present world, 1 Tim. 4. 10. if they have wholly lost their first love, zeale, &c. Revel. 2. 4. the Lord will take them as he findes them: Mat. 24. 46. *That servant is blessed whom his master at his comming shall find doing his duty*: but as it followeth, ver. 48. *If that evill servant shall say in his heart, my master doth defer his comming, and begin to smite his fellows*, his master will take him as he findes him; all the righteousness men have done, shall not be remembered, if the Lord finde them doing wickedly, as appeares plainly, Ezech. 18. 34. and indeed it shall stand up in judgement against them. If then wee would not lose the honour that of right is due from men to old age, if wee would not forfeit the favour of God, and being found by him in the way of sinne, encrease the waight of our judgement; let us labour to grow in grace as we grow in yeares; and as wee goe before others in age, so let us exceed them in the graces of Gods spirit.

The next thing we are to marke, is the inference of this verse upon the former, it depending upon the former, as a conclusion, and exhortation grounded upon it: the Apostle saith, hee saw in his Spirit the stedfast faith of the Colossians

fians, and upon that doth inferre this exhortation; therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walke in him.

First, hee sheweth they were sound in faith, and then doth wish and exhort them to goe on as they had begun.

Hence wee may gather, that proceeding and going on in Religion must be upon a good ground, and a good beginning; men are not generally to proceed in Religion as they have begun howsoever, but having begun well and in the truth, then they are to goe on.

For why? there may be a beginning in error, and to goe on in error being convinced by evidence of the truth, is obstinacy, and if the error be in the foundation of Religion, it is heresie, and to goe on, yea, to run with speed out of the way, it were better to turne backe; even zeale it selfe, earnest love of Religion, and of such as are religions, it must be bounded and kept within a right compassse, it must be squared by the rule of the Apostle, Galath. 4. 18. It is a good thing to love earnestly alwaies in a good thing, &c. This being so, the Papists have no reason to open their mouths, and to cry out against us for our separation from them, because wee walke not in that religion our forefathers received of them: and because we hold not communion with them in their idolatry and superstition, (for that were to goe on in a wrong way.) I know they brand us with the marke of Heretickes, and forsaking (as they say) the Catholique society; but they are easily answered, that wee have separated our selves, not from the Catholique Church of Christ, but from the malignant Antichristian Synagogue of Rome, and have gone out of Babylon, as the holy Ghost hath commanded, Rev. 18. 4. that wee should not communicate with her in her sinnes, and so be partakers of her plagues.

But (say they) doe you thinke all that communicate with the Church of Rome, being (as you say) Babylon, are liable to the plagues of Babylon? what say you then to your owne fore-fathers, who lived and died in the time of Popery? will you say they were all cast away and condemned? See the cunning of these men to bleere the eyes of the World; and at this, doe many weake and simple Christians stumble.

I answer them no, we are not so to thinke; that were to step up into Gods Judgement-seat, and to limit the power and goodnesse of our most powerfull and gracious God: wee are to perswade our selves, that at one time or other, and by one way or other the Lord gave light, and a holy departure in his truth, to as many as did belong to his election, even in the midst of the darknesse of popery: we find it in the Booke of God, *Melchisedech*, *Naaman the Assyrian*, *Cornelius* and others, having (for any thing wee know) small or no meanes of true knowledge; yet by the working spirit of a gracious God, were mercifully pulled out of ignorance, and worshipped the true God; therefore wee are comfortably to hope of our forefathers living in time of ignorance, that they found mercy with the Lord. And to this purpose we have an excellent place, Rev. 9. 4 where it is said, it was commanded to the Locusts rising out of the smoke of the pit, that they should not hurt the grasse of the earth, neither any greene thing, neither any tree: but onely those men which have not the seale of God in their foreheads. A sweete testimony of the power and mercy of our most gracious God, who can, and (no doubt) did, (even when Antichrist was at his height, and in the midst of his Romish Locusts) preserve his chosen from hurt by them, to their destruction. We see then how we may with comfort answer the cavilling question of the popish sort touching the state of our forefathers; we see also our separation from their hereticall synagogue justified.

Here againe wee are to marke the phrase of the Apostle; he saith not, as yee have believed, but as yee have received: thus hee sets out the nature of true faith.

That

Doctr. 2.

Proceeding and going on in Religion must be upon a good ground.

Note.

Use.

Our separation from the Papists justified.

Objection.

Answer.

Doct. 3.
True faith is a
receiving of
Christ with all
his benefits.

Vse.
Comfort to all
that truly be-
lieve in Christ.

Objection.

Answer.

Doct. 4.
Christ must be
taught and re-
ceived as the
only Lord of
life, and as a
perfect Savi-
our.

Vse.
Confutation of
the Papists.

That true faith is a receiving of Christ with his benefits, and this is confir-
med by that, Ioh. 1. 12. *As many as received him, to them he gave power to be the
sonnes of God, even to them that believe in his name,* where wee see believing and
receiving Christ are made both one: and this is a matter of great comfort to all
that truly believe in Christ, they by faith doe really receive Christ: they doe it
not (as the Papists cavill) in meere imagination, but really they receive him, and
so stand truly and really iust in Gods sight by Christ his righteousness, being
imputed unto them, and received by them. Now this comfort the Papists labour
to wrest from us; and against it they reason thus:

If a believer be truly and really iust by Christ his righteousness imputed and
received, then was Christ truly and really a sinner, by our finnes laid on him:
for you will not say, hee was a sinner by infusion of sinne, but by sinne imputed
to him: now (say they) that cannot be, that hee was truly a sinner by sinne im-
puted unto him; for he is not truly a sinner that payes the debt of sinne, an inno-
cent and iust man may doe that: but he is truly a sinner, that either hath sinne
truly in him, or is so by imputation stricken, that the finnes are made his owne
really, and he in all respects to be dealt withall, as if he had sinned himselfe: but
to say that Christ was a sinner, is to say hee was averted from God, the slave of
the Divell, and sonne of perdition, which is blasphemy.

I answer, he is truly a debtor that undertakes the debt of another, and of his
owne accord bindes himselfe to pay the debt, and thus did Christ: he willingly
undertooke the debt of Gods chosen, and so became truly a debtor for them.

Againe, it is no blasphemy to say, that Christ having our finnes on him, was
in that respect to God for us, as every one of us is in himselfe to God: they are
the words of the Apostle, Gal. 3. 13. that he became a curse for us, &c. and so
redeemed us from the curse of the Law: therefore let not the Papists thinke to
wring this ground of comfort from us, that Christ willingly undertaking to sa-
tisfie for our fins, became truly a sinner, but by our finnes laid upon him; and we
again became truly righteous by his righteousness received by true faith; the
comfort of this will never faile us.

The next thing wee are to marke in this verse, that the Apostle saith, the Co-
lossians received Christ Jesus (the Lord) adding these words, *the Lord*, by way
of distinction, to put a difference betweene the true and false Christ: for false
teachers preached Christ Jesus, onely as the sonne of David, and ioyned *Moses*
unto him, and made a mixture of the Law and the Gospell, and urged circumci-
sion as necessary to salvation; but the true Apostles taught Christ Jesus as the
only true Lord and Saviour, and so the Colossians received him.

Hence I gather, that Christ must be taught, and must be received with due
respect of his glory, as the only Lord of life, and as a perfect Saviour, or else hee
is not taught, nor received as he ought to be. We find, Act. 3. 14, 15. Saint Peter,
in his sermon, gives him these titles, The holy one, and the iust, the Lord of life,
whom God hath raised from the dead, &c. and that iustly, hee being properly,
and by nature holy and iust, and making all his members so, and he being the Au-
thor and giver of life and glory, and so is he to be taught, and so to be received.
Saint Iude in his Epistle, verse 4. saith, that certaine intruding deceivers did deny
Christ Jesus: and marke how he describes him; That onely ruler who is God
and our Lord Jesus Christ, for so so the words are to be read.

Now this I note, to let us see that the Papists are in this regard blame-wor-
thy, and iustly to be taxed: they teach and professe Christ to be a Saviour,
yet not a perfect Saviour in himselfe by merit, but a Saviour in us, and in-
deed onely an instrument of salvation, giving us grace to merit our owne salva-
tion: for they teach, that through his merits, God doth powre into every true
Christian a particular iustice or righteousness, whereby he is sanctified and made
able to doe good workes, and to merit eternall life; they be their owne words:
and

and ſo they derogate and detract much from the glory of Chriſt, yet they are not (or at the leaſt ſeeme not to be perſwaded) they would make the world believe they honour Chriſt, much more by their doctrine than wee doe by ours, though wee teach that Chriſt is a perfect Saviour in himſelfe, in regard of merit, and that onely our faith doth apprehend and apply his perfect righteouſneſſe and merit, they plead thus for themſelves.

Say they, power given to us through the merits of Chriſt to merit our owne ſalvation, it is a greater gift than faith to lay hold on his merits to our juſtification: it is a greater gift to make us able to merit our owne ſalvation, than to give us faith to apprehend the merit of Chriſt to our juſtification and ſalvation, and ſo it doth more magnifie the merit of Chriſt, for the greater the gift is, the greater is the glory of the giver, therefore (ſay they) our doctrine doth more honour Chriſt than yours: to this I anſwer. Firſt they muſt proove out of the Word of God, that ſuch power is given them, which they are never able to doe, before they make compariſon betweene that power, and faith. Againe I anſwer them, it is a greater gift of God to vouchſafe us eternall life without any deſert of ours, than to make us able to deſerve it: it is more for the glory of God, and it doth more magnifie Gods grace, and Chriſt his merits, that we ſhould have everlaſting life of the free gift of God, through the merits of Chriſt apprehended and applied by faith, than of our deſerving by his gift; therefore it is a meere cavill and ſhift of the Papifts, thus to plead for defence of their doctrine, and wee are to renounce it, as much derogating and detracting from the glory of our Lord, and perfect Saviour Chriſt Jeſus.

Come wee to the laſt words of this verſe (*ſo walke in him*) In that the Apoſtle doth teſtifie of the Coloſſians in the verſe before, that they had ſtedfaſt faith in Chriſt: and in this verſe, that they had received and truly believed Chriſt, and upon this doth exhort them to walke on by their faith. We are taught that a good Chriſtian muſt not onely believe in Chriſt, and by his faith receive Chriſt and his benefits, for remiſſion of his finnes, and to his juſtification, but his whole life muſt be a walking and going on in that faith. A true Chriſtian muſt not onely believe in Chriſt, but hee muſt alſo live in Chriſt by faith, and by the motion of his Spirit. Wee have this further proved unto us by the example of our Apoſtle, Gal. 2. 10. hee ſaith, that Chriſt lived in him (that is) by his Spirit and in that, that hee lived in the fleſh, hee lived by faith in the ſonne of God. Gal. 3. 11. hee makes it generall citing the words of the Propheſy, that the juſt ſhall live by faith: and Rom. 8. 1. he ſaith, *ſuch as are in Chriſt, walke not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit*. And indeede, as many as believe in Chriſt to their juſtification, muſt alſo live in him by faith, and finde him powerfull in them by his Spirit to their ſanctification.

The point no doubt is cleare, for the truth of it; yet haply ſome may deſire to be more particularly enformed touching this duty, and may demand how they are to live by their faith in Chriſt, the generall being not ſo eaſie to be underſtood. Know therefore, for our better and more ſpeciall inſtruction in this point, that our faith in Chriſt muſt ſhew it ſelfe powerfull, not onely in our juſtification in the ſight of God, and in our inward renovation, faith purifying the heart, Acts 15. 9. which things are not ſo ſenſible and eaſie to be diſcerned: but we are to walke by our faith in Chriſt, our faith is to be working in our outward actions, both of Religion and generall calling, as we are Chriſtians; and in the outward actions of our particular places and callings.

How is that may ſome ſay?

I anſwer: when faith makes us doe the workes of our callings in hearty and ſincere obedience to Gods commandements, with diligence, and with prayer, in quietneſſe and contentment, referring the ſucceſſe of our labours to the Lord, when wee labour in our callings, therein to obey the commandements of God, and

that will
waſted from
theſe
Obj. 2.

Anſw.

to Chriſt
over ſaw
theſe
theſe

Doctr. 5.
True believers
muſt not onely
believe in Chriſt
but muſt alſo
live in Chriſt
by faith, and
by the motion
of the Spirit.

How we are to
live by faith in
Chriſt in our
generall cal-
ling as Chriſti-
ans, and in our
particular pla-
ces & callings.

Queſt.
Anſwer.

How faith
must be pow-
erfull in our
outward cros-
ses and affli-
ctions,

Vse.
Reprooffe of
them who live
not by faith
in Christ.

and doe our office with diligence (calling on God for a blessing on our labour, and for the issue of our labours, we rest our selves upon the promise of the Lord, Heb. 13. 5. *I will not faile thee, neither forsake thee:*) then wee walke by faith in the outward workes of our particular callings.

Againe, our faith is to shew it selfe powerfull in our outward crosses and afflictions that befall us in our bodies or goods: we are then by faith to rely upon that promise of God, 1 Cor. 10. 12. that the Lord will either give *strength to beare them, or deliverance out of them:* and though temporary things faile us, yet we are by faith to retaine hope of mercy and life eternall, and to wait on the good pleasure of the Lord for our deliverance. The Prophet saith, Isa. 40. 31. *but that believeth shall not make haste.* Thus wee see in some part how wee are to live by our faith in Christ, in regard of our outward actions (both of religion and of our particular callings) and in the outward afflictions of this life.

And these things I rather insist in (which are things more sensible and familiar) that hereby wee may try our selves whether wee walke in Christ, and live by faith in him or no: and if by these things we try our selves, we shall find that many of us come short of this duty: for why? doe not most amongst us spend their daies in the cares of this world? they care not only to doe the workes of their callings (which is commendable) but they care for the issue of their labours, which belongs onely to God; and these cares so take up their hearts, that no good thing can enter into them: and doe not many seeme to trust in God so long, as it pleaseth him to vouchsafe unto them the meanes of life and maintenance: but if these be taken away, then they are confounded in themselves, as if there were no God to care for them. Is this a life of faith? no, no, this is to live by sense, like bruite beasts: this is not to trust God upon his word and promise, but upon his pawne, like the distrustfull Usurer, who will not trust a man without some specialty, or some pawne: so if the Lord please to lay downe his pawne, as money, goods, lands, &c. and leaves them in our hands, we trust him: but if these be taken from us, wee doubt of his providence and goodnesse, and breake out into distempered speeches; yea, some are so distrustfull of the providence of God, that they thinke when they have plenty of outward things, if they should be somewhat liberall towards good uses, then they and theirs might haply be brought to want: see how cunning our owne corruption is to deceive us; what is this but to prove against our selves, that wee are not the children of God, for wee know wicked men are tender over their owne children, even Beares and Lyons provide for their young; shall then the God of all goodnesse withdraw his hand from helping his sonnes and daughters, and making supply with interest of that they give to a good use? It is not possible, let us then be better advised; and that we may be stird up to this duty (now delivered) know we this for a truth, if our faith be not in some measure powerfull in all actions and passions of our lives, wee yet believe not in Christ to our iustification, but we are yet in our finnes, and our case (as yet) is damnable: for without question as many as have received Christ Jesus by faith to their iustification, cannot but feelee the power of that faith to their renovation, and in the whole course of their lives. Let then as many as hold themselves interess'd in the blood of Jesus Christ, labour to feelee the power of their faith in such things as they may best iudge of it, as in the outward actions of religion, and of their particular places and callings, and in the outward afflictions that befall them.

When all things in this world (friends and meanes, yea, health and strength) faile us, yet let us then by faith rest on the promise of God, and certainly hope for mercy and life eternall, that so wee may live by faith, and may also die by faith, and both in life and death finde comfort in this, that wee are truly iustified, and within the compasse of Gods speciall love and favour in Jesus Christ.

Veri.

Verf. 7. Rooted and built in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have beene taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

THis verse containes an application of the manner, how the Colossians were to walke in Christ (namely) not onely as they had received him, but in respect of themselves that they should goe on in him with constancy, and with a settled course, expressed first in those metaphoricall termes, (*rooted and built in him*) and the more plainly (*stedfast in the faith*) and the Apostle having made mention of faith, (which is a word comprehending many sorts under it) subjoynes an amplification of it, what faith he meant (namely) that faith of Christ, which they had beene truly taught (*as ye have beene taught*).

And againe, that they should bee so farre from being deficient and failing in the fruits of that faith, that they should on the contrary abound in them, and that with alacrity and cheerefulnesse of mind, set out by the effect of it (namely) thanksgiving (*abounding therein with thanksgiving*.) Thus wee have the connexion of this verse with the former, and the generall matter contained in it: come we to the words of it, and first of the words, *Rooted and built in him*. These words are metaphoricall and borrowed, one from trees and plants, that as trees and plants not onely grow upon their rootes, but are strong and able to endure the force of windes and weather, according as they are rooted: so the Apostle would have the Colossians, and all true beleivers (being engrafted into Christ by faith, and growing up as branches from him, as a roote that cannot be loosened) to be constant and strong in their faith. The second metaphor is taken from houses and buildings, and in substance doth signifie as much as the first, that as houses set upon a strong foundation, are firme, and stand without falling in the greatest violence of winde or water: so the Apostle would have true beleivers being built on Christ the foundation of his Church: or rather in Christ, as the Apostle saith here; and Ephes. 2. the last verse (to put a difference betweene earthly and spirituall buildings) a foundation that can never bee shaken, to bee firme and stedfast in Christ, and the meaning of the Apostle is this: That they should walke and grow strongly and firmly in Christ, so as no temptation or affliction should be able to remove them from him; even as trees well and deeply rooted, and as houses set upon sure, firme, and immovable foundations, which neither winde nor weather can overturne and throw downe.

Now here passing by that doctrine of constancy in faith, of which I shall have more fit occasion to speake when I come to handle the next words: the first thing wee are to marke is, that the Apostle was not content to exhort the Colossians to walke in Christ: but he addes further, *rooted and built in him*, that they should walke in Christ, as those that are rooted and built in him.

Hence the Apostle by implication doth give us to understand, that some men seeme to walke in Christ, and yet indeed are not rooted and built in him: Mistake me not; I say not that some doe truly walke in Christ, and yet are not rooted and built in him: for certainly, as many as truly walke and live by their faith in Christ, are rooted and built in him: but I say some seeme to walke in Christ, and yet they are not rooted and built in him. Thus much the continuance of the Apostles exhortation in these words doth imply: he adding to his exhortation (walke in Christ) rooted and built in him, doth thereby intend the good of the Colossians, that they should walke in Christ, as those that were rooted and built in him, and withall doth intimate unto us, that men may seeme to walke in Christ, and yet not be rooted and built in him, nor be able to stand without falling in time of triall, when they shall be tryed either by cunning decelvers, or open and violent persecutors. Some seeme to walke in Christ, and yet they are not able to stand in time of such triall. And this is further proved unto us by

Interpretation.

Doctrine 1.

Some seeme to walke in Christ, and yet are not rooted and built in him.

the second sort of hearers in the Parable, Matth. 13. 20. 11. Some heare the word and incontinently receive it with joy, and yet have no roote in themselves, and dure but a season: for as soone as tribulation or persecution commeth (because of the word,) by and by they are offended: yea, temporary beleevers there spoken of, not only know the word, assent to the truth of it, professe it and rejoyce in it, yea, in the saving promise, without effectuell applications but being pricked forward with desire of praise, profit or some sinister respect, bring forth some kinde of seeming fruits: yet (saith our Saviour) they have no roote in themselves, and dure but a season: they are like come growing on the house top, and as soone as tribulation or persecution commeth, because of the word, they are offended and start aside.

Vse.

Such as perswade themselves they live by faith in Christ, must looke that their faith be so rooted and built in Christ, as in time of triall it will not faile them.

This being so, is concerneth as many of us as perswade our selves that wee walke in Christ, and live by faith in him, to looke that our faith be not a temporary faith, but such a faith as is well rooted and built in Christ, and such as will stand strong and stedfast in time of triall.

Some may say, How shall we know that, how shall wee now (before triall and trouble come upon us,) know that our faith is so rooted and built in Christ, that in time of triall it will stand fast and not faile us?

I answer, we shall know it by this, if so be wee finde our selves now able by grace, and by the strength of faith, to withstand strong tentations of sinne, even such as doe most fit our naturall inclinations: if we now (being out of triall by outward trouble) doe finde our faith a shield, as the Apostle calls it. Ephes. cha. 6. vers. 6. *to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked*, even sudden, strong and dangerous tentations, then doubtlesse our faith is well rooted, and in time of triall by outward trouble we may be sure it will not faile us, but we shall bee able to stand out: if now in time of outward prosperity wee be led away to vanity, to pride, to selfe conceit, or to any other sinne; when triall comes, certainly we shall fall away: and this is to bee thought on and considered. I am perswaded if men did duly examine themselves, I meane such as have beene tried by seducement of impostors and cunning deceivers, and have yeelded and fallen away to Brownisme, or Papisme, if they should call themselves to account, they shall finde that they were never able by the strength of faith to overcome some known sinne, as of pride, of selfe conceit, or the like, and so by the just judgement of God have beene left to themselves: and being so left, have fallen, and made it manifest and cleare to the world, that though they seemed to walke in Christ, and haply with great forwardnesse, yet (indeed) their faith was never rooted and built in him. If then wee would be assured that our faith is so rooted in Christ, that in time of triall, either by seducement, or open persecution, it will not faile us; let us before such triall, labour to finde and feele our faith strong to withstand tentation to knowne sinnes: if wee finde our faith stedfast, and able to stand against the assaults of Satan in time of prosperity, then doubtlesse we shall finde it strong, and never failing in time of triall by outward trouble or any other adversity whatsoever.

Note.

The next thing we are to observe from these words, is, that Christ is compared to a roote and foundation in respect of his members, in that the Apostle saith, they must be *rooted and built in him*.

Docr. 2.

Christ gives both sap and safety to all his members.

Hence we may conclude, that Christ gives both sap and safety to all his members, there is no danger of any hurt to them that grow by faith in Iesus Christ: the roote of the tallest Cedar, or strongest oake cannot defend the branches, or the body from hurt, the winde may breake off the branches, the axe may cut downe the body without resistance: but Christ the roote of all his members, being all-sufficient and omnipotent, doth minister unto them as much safety as sap, so that no storme nor tempest, no force nor weapon, can separate the least of his members from him, nor any way hurt them.

Conclie.

Reason.

I

2

Object.

Answer.

Vse.

We must draw our safety from the same roote from whence we derive our salvation.

Doctr. 3.

The true members of Christ are fruitfull branches, & as (living stones) receive grace and life from him.

Vse.

Hypocrites and ill livers cannot be true members of Christ.

Consider we the reasons of it, which are chiefly these two.

First, Christ doth remove from his members that which is the cause of all hurt and danger, (namely) sinne, he takes away the guiltinnesse and punishment of sin, by his suffering, Rom. 8. 1. and the power of it by his grace: therefore what hurt may they feare?

Againe, as many as have Christ for their root, have God his Father for their dresser and keeper, Ioh: 15. 1. 2. therefore if any thing be hurtfull in them, hee takes it away: if any thing wanting, he supplies it; if violence bee offered them, hee withstands it: and even thus the Lord speaks of himselfe, Isai. 27. vers. 3. Sing (saith hee) of the vineyard of red wine, I the Lord doe keepe it, I will water it every moment: lest any assaile it, I will keepe it night and day. What then can hurt the Lords vine or any branch of it?

Some may say, none are more subject to miseries, troubles, and dangers, than they that be the members of Christ, daily experience shewes it.

Though they be so, yet those miseries that befall them bee not hurtfull unto them: death it selfe hath lost his sting through Christ; and therefore nor any other misery can hurt, or molest them that belong to Christ: the troubles that befall them are testimonies of Gods love, and not of his anger: would wee then have our hearts at liberty, free from dread of all hurt that may befall us, especially in the time of some common calamity?

We must then draw all our safety from whence we derive our salvation, even from the Lord Iesus our Saviour, from our being in him and growing in him, and our communion with him: without this, all the meanes in the world will not secure us from hurt, and deliver us from plagues and judgements: no, Gods owne hand will not comfort us without respect had to this, that wee are members of Christ: such as be out of Christ, and unbelievers, have the wrath of God, his threatnings, his oath, and his hand against them; and what hand or strength can then defend them? On the contrary, true belevers are so free from danger of any hurt, that though Satan and his instruments would, yet they can doe nothing that may hurt them: yea, I may be bold to say (if I be rightly understood) that God himselfe can doe nothing to their hurt, because hee will not: and so understand my speech of his actuall power, for his will and actuall power are of equall extent, the one goeth not further than the other, and so I say God himselfe can doe nothing that may hurt them: which is a great comfort to all true belevers. Let us therefore labour to draw safety from the same roote from whence we derive our salvation, even from Iesus Christ our Saviour by being ingrafted into him, and rooted in him by faith, and then we shall bee safe, and free from danger of hurt, in the greatest calamities that can be sent amongst us.

Observe we further that the Apostle saith, (rooted in Christ, and built in him) and not on Christ, which is a phrase not usuall in building: giving us to understand, that true belevers are (as Peter calls them, 1 Pet. 2. vers. 5.) living stones, living and growing in the foundation. Hence I gather, that all the members of Christ are fruitfull branches, and as living stones receiving life, and grace from Christ the root and foundation: and therefore it is false which the Papists affirme, that hypocrites and ill livers may bee members of Christ: Wicked men may be members of the visible Church for a time, and of Christ sacramentally, but not indeed: As many as are indeed, and true, members of Christ, receive sap from him, and bring forth fruits answerable to such a root.

Come wee to those words where the Apostle doth plainly expresse the meaning of his continued exhortation, that the Colossians should goe on in faith with constancy, as they had begun, having fixt it downe in words metaphorically, whereof wee have spoken: hee further propounds in these plaine termes *stablished in the faith* together with an explanation what faith he means,

Interpretation.

Doct. 4.

We are to be persuaded in our hearts that the faith of Iesus Christ we hold, and professe, is the true faith.

Reason.

Vse.

We are not to be unsettled in the principall points of religion, as some be.

Quest.

Ans.

namely, that faith which they had beene taught as yee have beene taught: the word (*stablished*) is not here metaphoricall, as in chap. 1. 23. In the originall we finde two different words, the word here is to be taken in the proper signification of it, and is as much as if the Apostle had said, confirmed in the faith; so it is translated, 1 Cor. 1. 6. *as the testimony of Iesus Christ hath bene confirmed in you.* The Apostles meaning then is briefly this, confirmed in the faith of Christ, or of the Gospell (all is one in substance) as ye have beene truly taught by the true teachers of the Gospell.

The first thing that is offered from these words to be considered, is the constancy and ability of faith: in that the Apostle saith (*stablished in the faith*) the poynt is this: That we are to be settled and confirmed in our knowledge, and faith of the Gospell: we are not to stand in a hammering, not knowing whether our faith be right or wrong, but we are to be persuaded in our hearts, it is the true faith of Iesus Christ, we hold and professe, and to be resolved rather to forgoe our lives, than to forsake it: and this is that which the Apostle doth enforce upon the Corinthians: 1 Cor. 16. 13. saith hee, *stand fast in the faith, &c.* And againe, Ephes. 4. 12. hee saith, it is one speciall use of the ministry of the Gospell, that Christ ascending up on high gave gifts unto men, some to bee Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the gathering together of the Saints, for the worke of the ministry, and for the edification of the body of Christ, &c. that wee hence-forth should be no more like children tossed up and downe altogether in uncertainty, but that we should be settled in all points of religion we professe, and have our hearts stablished with grace, as wee have it, Hebr. 13. 9. The reason and ground of this (that our knowledge and faith should be thus settled and stablished) is, because it is knowledge and faith of the Gospell, which is the eternall and unchangeable word of God: and therefore it must bee answerable to such an object in some measure of constant and settled ability. Farre bee it then from us (wee now by Gods mercy professing the true faith of Iesus Christ) that we should be so unsettled (as some are) in the principall points of religion, that every cavill of any seducer should drive us from our hold, and make us doubt whether we goe right or wrong: let this be farre from us to be so light or wavering.

Haply some may say, how is it possible? how should wee bee settled in that we hold and bleeve, amidst the multiplicity of opinions, and differences of judgements? some are Papists, some Protestants, some hold one thing, and some another: how then can wee be resolved, it is the truth of God which we in our Church hold and professe?

I answer, wouldest thou indeed (amidst diversity of the opinions) bee resolved thou art in the right way, and that the faith which thou dost hold and professe (being the faith of this Church) is the true faith of Iesus Christ? looke thou that thine heart bee upright in the feare of God, that thou with an honest and good heart, heare, reade, and meditate in the word of God, and endeavour to practise that which thou knowest, and then thou shalt not be left to shift for thy selfe, and to roule up and downe in doubtfulnessse, and uncertainty, for want of direction: but thou shalt then have a faithfull guide and director, within thine owne breast: thine eares shall heare a voice behinde thee (as saith the Prophet Isai. 30. 21.) even the voice of the spirit of God, who is alwaies to them that are upright and true hearted Christians, saying, this is the way, walke in it: for marke what the Lord promiseth to them that faithfully serve him, Psal. 138. 1. *What man is hee that feareth the Lord? him will he teach the way that he shall chuse.*

Again, consider that excellent speech of our Saviour to this purpose, Ioh. 6. verse, 17. *If any man doe the will of my Father, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speake of my selfe.* Hee that is the doer of the will

of God, in true and sincere obedience, hee shall not be left in doubt, but shall be taught the truth by the spirit of God, and fully resolved of the same: and indeed, if men be left wavering and doubting whether they be in the right way or no, it is because they are laden with sinnes, and carried away with their owne lusts, and are utterly void of the feare of God: therefore labour thou to feare God, and to obey his will, according to the measure of knowledge, and thou shalt be guided by the Spirit of God, to know the truth, to love and embrace the truth: yea, thou shalt have thine heart so stablished by grace, as that thou shalt be settled, and fully resolved to live and die in the truth, held and professed.

And that wee may be stirred up to this duty, consider wee that the end of the doctrine of the Gospell is to confirme us, and to make us certaine of Gods grace in Jesus Christ: to make us rejoyce in Gods presence in this world, even to speake to God in prayer, and to meete him with comfort in his Word and Sacraments, and at the day of Judgement, to stand with boldnesse before the throne of glory. Now this cannot be done so long as wee are wavering, and floting up and downe in uncertainty: *Iohn* saith, 2 Epistle, verf. 9. Who-soever abideth not constant in the doctrine of Christ, hee hath not God to be his gracious Father. If then wee would not disappoint our selves of the chiefe comfort of the Gospell, let us never rest till wee be so settled, and confirmed in our true knowledge and faith of the Gospell, that no blast of false doctrine, or breath of any seducer, can be able to remove us.

The next thing we are to marke from these words, is, that the Apostle doth limit, and referre the faith wherein he would have the Colossians stablished, to the doctrine of the Gospell that had bene taught amongst them, (*Stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, &c.*) Hence we may take up this knowne conclusion, that true faith hath relation to the Word preached; true faith is conceived and wrought by the publike ministry, and teaching of the Word. Call to mind for proofe of this, only the knowne gradation of the Apostle, Rom. 10. 14. *How shall they believe in him in whom they have not heard? and how shall they heare without a Preacher?* and the inference upon that, verse 17. *is this, then faith is by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.*

Now this makes it cleere, that the faith of some (I meane of such as build on visions, and apparitions, and private illumination of the spirit) is but a fancie, a meere dotage, and device of the Divell: 2 Cor. chap. 3. verf. 8. the Apostle calls his preaching *the ministration of the Spirit*: giving us to understand, that the Word and Spirit are so nearly conjoynd, that they must alwaies goe together: the Spirit shineth unto us in the Word, and the Word is powerfull by the Spirit, and wee must be taught of God; but it must be by the Word, and by the ministry of man. Our Saviour Christ, (*Joh. 14. verf. 26.*) promisseth, that his Spirit shall suggest, and bring all things to the mindes of his Apostles, and followers, which hee had taught them, and not any new doctrines or revelations: therefore they who rest upon any revelations in the matter of Faith, besides the Word, most falsely pretend the Spirit of God.

Againe, let this conclusion be thought onto further use: it doth discover unto us, that the faith of many persons is but a meere imagination: for why? doe not many say they believe their salvation by Christ, and yet live in continuall neglect, or contempt of the publike ministry of the Word? they either come not to the publike exercises of the Word, or care not to profit by them. Let such persons know, that their faith is indeed but a fancie: and as it is not conceived by the teaching of the Word, nor built on the Word; so in time of triall, it will minister unto them no comfort from the Word (the store-house of all sound saving comfort.)

Doctr. 5.

True faith hath relation to the Word preached.

Vse 1.

Faith built on visions and apparitions and private illumination of the spirit is a meere fancie.

Vse 2.

The faith of many persons discovered to be but a meere imagination.

Doct. 6.

We are to be as fully perswaded of the truth of Gods Word and promise taught by man lawfully called, as if God himselfe should speake unto us from heaven.

Use.

Strength to our faith and comfort unto us in time of trouble and temptation.

Interpretation.

Doct. 7.

To the doctrine of faith or any other grace taught amongst us, we are to adde an increase in respect of our selves in particular.

One thing more may be gathered from these words; In that the Apostle would have the Colossians to be stablished in that faith they had beene taught, We may conclude, that we are to be as fully perswaded of the truth of the Word and promise of God (taught by man lawfully called) as if God himselfe should speake unto us from heaven: for why? God hath so ordained: it is the ordinance of God, that the promises of the Gospell should be preached, and applied to our soules by the ministry of man, and by the vertue of Gods ordinance: the word and promise truly taught, and applied by a lawfull minister, is as certaine and infallible, as if the Lord should immediatly speake from heaven himselfe. And for this very cause saith the Apostle, 1 Thes. 2. 13. thanke we God without ceasing, that when yee received of us the Word of the preaching of God, yee received it, not as the word of men, but as it is indeed the Word of God, which also worketh in you that believe, a plaine and pregnant proove of the point delivered.

And this (for the use of it) may serve to strengthen us in faith: it may comfort and cheere us up in time of trouble, or temptation, when we are conflicting with Satan, and wrestling against dispaire. If then it please the Lord either to bring to our remembrance, the sweete promises of the Gospell (we have heard delivered, and applied in the publike ministry) wee are to apprehend and to take hold of them, and to be fully perswaded of the truth of them to our comfort: or if it please the Lord at such a time to send unto us his Minister, *so declare unto us our righteousness*, as *Iob* saith, chap. 33. 23. and to say unto us out of the Word of God, believe, and repent, and Gods mercy belongs unto thee, wee are then to be verily perswaded of the truth of that promise, as if God himselfe should speake unto us with his owne immediate voice from heaven, and so to be comforted and strengthened in our faith, and full assurance of Gods mercy: When *Nathan* came to *David* being cast downe to the mouth of hell, (yet his faith not altogether failing) and told him in the word of a Prophet, as we reade, 2 Sam. 12. 13. *The Lord hath put away thy sinne*: no doubt *David*s heart was much cheered, and comforted, and his soule much strengthened in the assurance of Gods mercy; yea, doubtesse more comforted by *Nathan*s speech, than if all the men in his Kingdome, (being not Prophets,) should have said as much unto him, because the promise and blessing belongs properly to the Minister in the discharge of his function. When therefore in the like case the Minister shall say unto us, believe and repent, and mercy belongs unto thee: we are then to be as thoroughly perswaded it is true, as if God himselfe should call us by name, and say believe thou, and repent thou, and mercy belongs to thee, or say unto us; I am thy Father, and thou art my childe, if thou believe and repent.

It followeth, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

In these words the Apostle makes knowne to the Colossians, that hee would have them so farre from being deficient in faith, as that they should abound, and encrease, and grow to a great measure, and that with cheerefulnesse. For that is briefly the meaning of the words, *abounding* in that faith yee have beene taught, with cheerefulnesse. For concluding of the first point hence offered, wee are to marke that the Apostle doth not say *abounding* in faith generally, and so urging upon the Colossians, the generall proposition, that they should continually grow in grace, in faith, &c. but he doth limit his speech to that faith, they had beene taught, and faith *abounding* therein.

Hence wee may gather, that to the doctrine of faith, hope, love, or any vertue taught amongst us: we are to adde a measure, and a further encrease in respect of our selves; wee are not to content our selves with that doctrine of faith, hope, love, or other grace that is delivered, and taught: but wee are to adde unto it, and further to abound in it, in regard of our owne particular measure, and use of that grace.

Understand mee aright, wee are not to adde unto it any different thing, that
"were

“were to adde to the Word of God: but after the hearing of the Doctrine of
 “faith, or any other grace, we are to gather more unto our selves in particular,
 “touching both particular knowledge, and particular use of the same, than that
 “we have heard delivered unto us: for prooffe of this, reade Matth. 13. 32. *He
 that receiveth the seed of the Word in good ground, is hee that heareth the Word, and
 understandeth it, which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth some and hundred
 fold, &c.* That I observe from hence (fixing the point in hand) is this: That good
 hearers must be like good ground, and good ground (as we know) brings forth
 more in harvest, than was cast into it in seede time: so good hearers receiving
 the seede of the Word into honest and good hearts, must send forth the same
 seede, but with some encrease in respect of themselves: they must adde a mea-
 sure to that they have received. Thus did *David*, hee did not content himselfe
 with that he had received of his teachers, but did daily encrease in his particular
 knowledge, and use of the things taught, in so much as hee became wiser, and
 had more understanding than all his teachers, Psal. 119. 99. Thus must we doe,
 wee must daily adde to that wee are taught, even a particular knowledge, and
 use of it in our selves:

Note.

The reason of it is this, if it please God to open our eyes, to see our spirituall
 estate, wee are best acquainted with our owne condition, and can better, and
 more particularly apply things taught, for the increase of our knowledge, and
 the use of them, than our teachers doe, or can doe: wee must not therefore rest
 in that we are taught, but adde a measure, and encrease unto it, in respect of our
 selves; now before I come to urge this duty, I hold it needfull to shew some
 speciall meanes, helping forward to the performance of it, which may justly be
 expected: for it may be said, wee see it indeed made manifest unto us, that wee
 are to adde a measure and encrease to that wee have beene taught: but how is
 that to be done? I answer, the meanes helping to that purpose are many, but
 especiall these two.

Reason.

Meanes helping
 us to adde
 an encrease to
 that we have
 beene taught,
 are two.

I

The first is a serious and carefull meditation upon things heard, a reviewing,
 and thinking againe upon the Doctrine of any grace taught, and made knowne
 unto us: for as Satan doth put into the heads of wicked men (they setting their
 wits to devise mischief) such platformes and devices as otherwise were won-
 derfull to come unto (witnesseth that of the Gunpowder treason.) So the spirit of
 God doth communicate to them that set themselves to meditate on good things
 heard (with care to profit by them) more heavenly things then they can possibly
 reach, either by hearing or reading. Hence it is that *David* saith, hee had more
 understanding than all his teachers, because the testimonies of the Lord were
 his daily meditation.

2

The second meanes (helping to the attainment of more particular know-
 ledge, and use of things heard, and of the Doctrine of any grace delivered in the
 publike ministry,) is an expressing of that in our lives, which is made knowne
 by teaching, and an exercising of that grace we are taught by the Word, as oc-
 casion is offered: for by expressing, and by exercise of faith, love, patience, and
 other graces, we shall come to more particular knowledge and use of those gra-
 ces, than by the Doctrine of the best teacher in the world; yea, by exercise, it
 comes to passe many times, that private men are able to speake of faith, and of
 other graces, with better knowledge and conscience than some Preacher, Heb.
 5. 8. It is said that our Saviour himselfe learned obedience, by the things which
 hee suffered, hee (exercising obedience in suffering,) learned obedience: and
 Rom. 5. 4. it is said, that *the exercise of patience brings forth experience*: (Marke
 it) by exercising patience under the crosse, wee come to such a particular and
 experimentall knowledge of our owne weaknesse by nature, and of our strength
 by grace, and by the assistance of Gods spirit, as we cannot possibly have by the
 doctrine of patience.

Use.
Reproole of
such as are de-
fective in this
duty.

Two motives
to stirre us up
to this duty.

Wee see then, that by serious meditation on things taught, and by exercising that grace that is made knowne unto us by the ministerie of the Word, wee may adde a further measure in regard of our particular knowledge, and use of the same. And this duty is worthy to be thought upon: the most of us are defective in it; wee are so farre from adding any measure, and abounding in faith or other grace, as that we erreine not things received, but let them slip and runne out of our mindes, yea, it may be we never thought this to be our duty, to adde any thing to that wee are taught. Indeed (as I said) wee are not to adde any thing unto it of our selves, but yet wee are by good meanes to goe on to a further encrease of our particular knowledge, and use of things taught: and to helpe us forward in this, consider wee these two things.

First, all the grace, and all the faith we have, or can reach unto, is little enough in time of tentation. When there comes a triall of our faith, patience, meeknesse, humility, or any other grace that is in us; we shall finde, that all we have is little enough, even holy *Iob*, though he had a great measure of patience, yet he found it too little in time of his greatest triall.

Againe, consider wee, that if we rest in that we heare and learne by teaching, and labour not to adde unto it a particular knowledge and use, surely our knowledge may end in ignorance and profanenesse; for such knowledge is either conceived by the strength of naturall understanding, or at the most, it is but a generall illumination, and common to us with the reprobate: and if wee goe no further, it must needs faile in the end, and (by the just hand of God) fall either into ignorance or profanenesse. Our Saviour faith, *Matth. 13. 12.* whosoever hath not (that is, as appeares by the circumstance of the place) more than a generall illumination, from him shall be taken away, even that hee hath, even his gifts of nature; as understanding, dexterity of wit, and the like; let it therefore be thought on, that the greatest measure of grace is little enough in the time of triall; and if we rest in that wee learne by teaching, our knowledge in the end may fall into ignorance or profanenesse.

Yea, wee may be left not onely destitute of heavenly graces, but (by the just hand of God) be stripped and deprived of the good gifts of nature. Let us therefore be stirred up to labour (both by serious meditation on things taught, and by exercise of that grace that is made knowne by the Word) to gather more particular knowledge and use of faith, or any other grace, than possibly wee can come unto, by hearing the best teachers.

The next thing hence offered to our consideration, is from the word here used [*abounding or exceeding*] for the word signifies not, that there can be any excesse of faith, or any other grace, as the Papists writing on, *Act. 17. 22.* foolishly define superstition, to be an excesse of religion: but that wee are not to content our selves with a small measure or mediocrity of faith, but to labour for a plerophorie, for store and plenty of faith.

Doct. 7.
We may law-
fully, and wee
ought to use all
good meanes
to encrease in
faith and in-
ward graces of
Gods Spirit.

Hence we may see what is a lawfull desire and seeking of abundance, namely this, we may lawfully labour, and use all good meanes to abound, but wherein? not in wealth and outward things, wee are not to seeke for such things more than necessary for nature, and person, but wee may lawfully use all good meanes to encrease faith, and inward graces of Gods Spirit; yea, it is our duty so to doe, as the Apostle exhorts, *1 Cor. 15. last verse*: therefore my beloved brethren, be yee stedfast, unmovable, abundant alwaies in the worke of the Lord, for as much as yee know that your labour is not in vaine in the Lord: the reason is plaine, namely this:

Reason.

Because the greatest measure of grace wee can reach in this life, is not more than necessary to salvation, as the least measure truly wrought may be sufficient; so the greatest measure is not more than sufficient; therefore wee may lawfully, and it is our duty to use all good meanes to increase faith, and in the feare

of

of God, and in other graces; a duty never more needfull to be urged than in these dayes.

Now most men have their desires and affections set on the world, and greedily hunt after abundance of riches and honours: Such as have plenty are never satisfied; such as are poore, esteeme them that have plenty most happy: and so every one (almost) labours to gather riches to himselfe, but not to be rich in God as our Saviour, speakes, Luke 12. 21. *to keepe up* (if possibly hee can, though by unlawfull meanes) *abundance of wealth and riches*, but few or none seeke after the true riches and treasures, after abundance of spirituall gifts and graces, which indeed ought to be sought for above all the wealth in the world. And to this end wee are to disburthen our selves, of care and greedily seeking after the things of this life; the thorny cares of this world choake the seed of the word, and make it unfruitfull, Matth. 13. 22. yea such as have abundance of riches and outward good things, ought to spend more time, more care and labour in seeking after grace and spirituall good things, than they who are in poverty, and want things needfull. Thus much the Apostle teacheth us, 1 Cor. 7. 21. when he saith to the servant, *if thou must be free, use it rather*: such as have plenty of wealth, have, or may have, more freedome to attend on holy exercises, therefore they are to give more time to attend on the meanes effectuell for the working and encrease of grace in them: & if thou beest poore, yet seeke for abundance of grace, if thou attaine that, thou art richer than the richest in the world (wanting grace:) to stirre up every one to labour after plenty of grace, if thou beest rich consider that thy life standeth not in thy abundance, as Christ himselfe saith Luke 12. 14. If thou hast no more care to be rich in grace, as thou art rich in outward things, thy judgement and condemnation shall be the greater in regard of thy riches: if thou beest poore, and hast no care to seek after grace, (of which sort there be too many) thy poverty is then a curse unto thee, and but a beginning of a further woe and misery, and the Lord hath begun to sit in judgement against thee already.

Again, let us all, both rich and poore, consider that this one thing (namely, seeking after grace) is absolutely necessary. *Maries pain*, Luk. 10. 42. though the entertaining of Christ was as necessary as any outward businesse, yet it was not necessary in comparison of that one thing: for without this a man cannot be saved, which he may without any thing else, having this. Let us therefore in the feare of God be stirred up, not so greedily to hunt after the things of this life, but to labour and seek after this one thing, so necessary to our owne salvation. Let us never rest, till (by the use of good meanes) we attaine to a plentiful measure of grace, and (by the spirit of grace) be transformed into the Image of Iesus Christ.

Come we to the last words (*with thanksgiving*) the doctrine offered unto us hence is this: That as we abound in faith, so are we to abound in thanksgiving to God, or (to deliver it positively) the proposition may be this, (the words will beare it) As many as abound in faith, they also abound in thanksgiving to God: it is not possible that any should have much faith, and little thankfulness to God for his mercy. The woman in the Gospell being assured of much mercy in the forgiveness of many sinnes, returned such love to Christ, Luk. 7. 47. and certainly, if there be in the heart abundance of faith, a plerophory, and full perswasion of Gods mercy, it will set the head on work, and make a man say with David, Psal. 116. 12. *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me*: yea, it will make him keepe a continual remembrance, with a serious acknowledgement of Gods mercy towards him, and to dedicate and consecrate his body and soule, and all that he hath, to the honour and service of Almighty God, for that is true thanksgiving to God. Let no man then deceive himselfe, but take it for an infallible rule, that according to the measure of our faith, will ever be the measure of thanksgiving.

Reprots of
such as greedily
hunt after
the things of
this life, and
have little or
no care to
seeke after spi-
rituall good
things.

Note.

Two motives
to stirre us up
to labour after
plenty of grace.

2

Doctr. 3.

As many as a-
bound in faith
they abound
also in thank-
giving to God.

Vse 1.

We are to exa-
mine our selves
touching the
measure of our
thanksgiving.

And

Vse 2.

According to the measure of our thanksgiving to God for his mercy in Christ, so is the measure of our faith.

Note.

According to the measure of our thanksgiving to God for his mercy in Christ, so is the measure of our faith.

And againe, according to the measure of our thanksgiving to God for his mercy in Christ, so is the measure of our faith: and remember withall, that if our thanksgiving to God be not greater for his mercy in Christ, than it is for other blessings vouchsafed, we have no faith at all: haply wee can open our mouths and blesse God for our health, our wealth, and other outward good things, (which is commendable indeed) but if wee have not our hearts more enlarged, if we cannot more blesse God for the worke of faith in our hearts, by the ministry of his Word, and for his mercy apprehended in Iesus Christ: our hearts are not right within us, for that is the greatest blessing of God that can be vouchsafed in this life: and if wee bee more thankfull for other blessings than for that, wee have as yet no apprehension of Gods mercy in Christ, at all.

Examine thy selfe therefore whosoever thou art; hast thou no thanksgiving to God for that excellent gift of faith, apprehending the mercy of God in Christ or lesse thanksgiving for that, than for other inferiour gifts? certainly then thou hast no faith at all.

And againe, hast thou thy heart enlarged? is it the very joy of thine heart? and canst thou more delight to blesse God for his mercy apprehended by faith in Christ, than for any other good thing? that is a sure argument of a sound faith; yea, that is a great argument that faith doth inwardly abound in thine heart, and then thou maist justly rejoyce and say, Blessed bee God, my faith encreaseth, and I shall certainly goe on daily to a clearer sight of Gods mercy in Iesus Christ, and in the end be made truly conformable to my head and Saviour the Lord Iesus.

Ver. 18. Beware lest there be any man that spoyle you through Philosophy, and vaine deceit, through the traditions of men, according to the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

In this verse the Apostle returnes againe to that generall proposition: That all things out of Christ (in the matter of salvation) are more deceit and vanity; and here hee comes to a more particular handling of it, laying before the Colossians the speciall meanes used by seducers to deceive them, and to draw them from Christ, and to thrust upon them other things besides Christ; that is the generall matter contained in this verse.

Now this matter is expressed and laid out in these particulars. First, in a caveat and premonition forewarning to take heed of seducement; which seducement is set forth by the nature and force of it, where it takes place, that it is of a corrupting and spoiling nature, in these words, Beware lest there be any that spoyle you. Secondly, in a speciall mention of some particular meanes whereby seducers use to deceive, namely these three: First, philosophy, which is further (by way of explication) said to be vaine deceit. Secondly, the traditions of men. Thirdly, the rudiments of the world. Then in the last words of the verse, the Apostle doth oppose to all these corruptions a generall refutation; that these things must needs be false, deceitfull, and of a spoiling nature, because they draw men from Christ, and from seeking happinesse and salvation by Christ alone: this is implied in those last words, and not after Christ.

Come wee to speake of the Apostles caveat and premonition, together with the first particular meanes of seducement, used by seducers, in these words, Beware lest there be any man that spoyle you through philosophy, and vaine deceit. Beware, the original word signifieth see or looke; it is a word proper to the eyes of the body, but here transfered to the mind: and the meaning of the Apostle is, let there bee in you a vigilant care and diligent heedfulness: [spoyle you] this word is metaphoricall, borrowed from thieves and robbers, who come upon a fold

fold of sheepe, take and binde the sheepe, and carry them away as a prey; and the meaning is, beware lest there be any that seaze upon you by imposture and seducement, and binde you, and carry you away from the true faith of Christ, as a spoyle, as a prey and a booty: [*philosophie*] this word properly signifieth love, or study of wisdom; but it is here put to signifie doctrine fetched from Heathen wise men, and from their bookes and writings containing the knowledge and science of naturall and morall vertues: and lest the Apostle should seeme generally to condemne all such knowledge, both morall and naturall: hee addes further as a restraint [*and vaine deceit*] that is, such doctrine fetched from Philosophers and Heathen Wise men, as is a vaine and pernicious seduction, and drawing out of the way (for so the word translated *deceit*, signifies) even a drawing out of the way from Christ, and his true doctrine, into errors, and (in the end) to destruction. Thus then are these words to be conceived, as if the Apostle had said: *Let there be in you a vigilant care and watchfulnesse, lest there bee any that by imposture doe seaze upon you, and carry you away as a prey, or a booty, and that by means of some corrupt doctrine derived and taken from Philosophers, and Heathen wise men, which may seeme to carry a shew of wisdom, but indeed is a vaine and pernicious drawing out of the way from Christ to error, and to destruction.*

Now from the first word of this verse, *beware*: wee are taught that heed and circumspection, is needfull, in respect of deceivers and seducers, we are to take heed of such as goe about to corrupt our faith, and our religion, and to draw us into error; yea, though we be such as are well grounded in the truth, yet are wee to take heed of seducement and drawing away: the Apostle witnesseth of the Colossians, vers. 4. that they were stedfast in the faith, yet he thought it meet to give them this caveat, *Beware lest there be any that speake you, &c.* Hence it is that he saith, Phillip. 3. 1. it grieved not him to write to them of that Church the same things; for hee knew it to bee a sure thing, even a thing sending to the confirmation and strengthening against seducers, and then hee subjoyne a tripled premonition, *Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the circumcision*: giving us thereby to understand, how needfull it is even for such as are well instructed (having bin often taught the same things) to looke about them, to take heed of the deceit of false teachers: for indeed the Lord who hath the ordering, and doth ever order the malice of Satan for the good of his Church doth suffer seducers in the Church, for the exercise of the faith and patience of his chosen, and for the manifestation of such as be sound in the truth, 1 Cor. 11. 19. Therefore they that bee most sound in the truth, are to be wary, and to take heed of seducement.

It were easie further to shew the necessity of this duty: but the question may be, how this is to be done, and how we shall take heede of such as seek to draw us to error.

To this I answer, that first we may learne to discern and know them.

Alas may some say, how shall we that are illiterate and unlearned know them? they can transforme themselves into the likenesse of true teachers, as Satan can change his colour, and transforme himselfe into an angel of light, so can his ministers, 2 Cor. 11. 14. 15. how then shall we know them?

Answer. I have heretofore shewed: in a word therefore to recall it, wee shall know them by their proper fruits, I meane by their fruits, not as they are Christians, but as they are teachers, that is, by their doctrine, if their doctrine bee consonant and agreeable to the written word of God, and grounded on Iesus Christ incarnate, with due respect of his glory, and set before us spirituall worship of God, agreeable to his nature and will, then is the teacher a true teacher: but if the doctrine either dissent from the word of God, or any thing derogate from the glory of Christ, or urge upon us an outward worship, standing in out-ward

Doct. 1.

We are to take heed of seducers who seeke to corrupt our faith and religion, and to draw us into error.

Quest.

Answer.

Quest.

Answer.

Vse.

We are to avoid the very breath of false teachers.

Dott. 2.

Where false teachers fasten upon any person or people they spoyle them.

Vse 1.

We are not to marvell that some persons that are drawn to error become obstinate in their error.

wards rites and ceremonies, then is the teacher a false teacher and having found him out so to be, and discovered him, wee are in the second place to avoid him, Rom. 16. 17. I beseech you marke them diligently, which cause division and offences, contrary to the doctrine yee have learned, and avoid them; yea, a false teacher being knowne to us, we are to avoid the very breath of him, we are to give him no entertainment, nor receive him to house, nor bid him good speed Ioh. 2. Epist. verse 12. We are to admit no conference nor speech with him, as some foolishly doe, presuming on their owne strength: for if we so doe, wee breake the commandment of God, who hath said, Receive not such a man to house, admit no familiar conference with him; and transgressing the commandment of God, can we have any assurance of preservation, that we shall be kept from hurt by such an one? no certainly; we passe the bounds God hath set about us, we are out of the way God hath appointed us to walke in, and wee can have no assurance of his protection: let us therefore labour to discern and know seducers, and when we know them, let us be carefull to avoid the very breath of them, let us not suffer them to come near us, lest so doing, we not only confirme them in their sinne, but bring our selves within danger of infection by them: yea, as the Apostle saith, to bee made a prey or spoyle unto them, and consequently a prey to the teeth of the Lyon, even that roaring Lyon the devill, who walketh about seeking whom he may devour.

The next thing wee have here to observe, is the nature and force of seducement, where it takes place, that it is of a spoiling nature; therefore the Apostle saith not, *Beware lest any seduce you*, but lest any spoyle you: the point of instruction hence offered is this:

That where deceivers, teachers of error, fasten upon any person or people, they spoyle them, they carry them away from the truth, as the beare, wolfe, or lion carry away their prey, which is not able to resist them, 2 Cor. 11. The Apostle painteth out the manners of false teachers, and by way of exprobration, reproving the Corinthians for suffering them amongst them, saith thus: *ye suffer even if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour*. Whence it is cleare, that where teachers of error are suffered, they bring men into bondage, they spoyle and devour them. A. 2. 0. 30. the Apostle saith to the elders of Ephesus, *of your owne selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw disciples after them*: the words carry this sence that false teachers rising up amongst them, and speaking perverse things, should so far prevaile with some, as they should make them (as it were) swear unto their opinions. Thus indeed did the Arrians, the Donatists, and other hereticks in succeeding times, as might be shewed at large.

First, therefore this may serve to make us cease from marvelling that some persons who are seduced by deceivers, and drawne away to Papiisme, to Brownisme, or the like, become wilfull and obstinate in their errors: here is the reason of it, false teachers have spoyled them, and made a prey of them, and hold them so fast, that a good shepheard may haply take out of the mouth of the Lion two legs, a peece of an eare, as the Prophet speakes, Amos 3. 12. but the greatest part they will hold without respite or recovery, yea, lamentable experience shewes, that where deceiving Jesuites, and Popish Priests fasten upon poore silly soules, they seaze not only on their minde, in corrupting them with error but upon their very wits; so that talk with them, and you shall find, though they seeme willing to be resolved, and to learne the truth, yet they wil not; but when they hear a reason which they cannot answer, in stead of yeelding, they say, were such and such here, they could answer you: in this case they doe as *Pharaoh* did, Ex. 7. 11. who when himselfe could not tell what to say to so manifest a signe as was wrought by *Moses* and *Aaron*, yet he perswaded himselfe his wilemen and his enchanters could, and send for them he will, to see what they can say, rather than yeeld to the worke of God; and thus do many seduced persons, when they know

know not what to answer themselves, yet they thinke that such and such can, and so they continue wilfully blinded and hardened in their errors. Let us not therefore marvell when we see persons seduced by Popish enchanters, having beene dealt withall, by such as are able to convince them, still wilfull and obstinate in their errors, and hating to be reclaimed: deceivers have taken them, and carried them away as a bootie, and hold them fast under their power, and by their jugglings haue not onely shut up their eyes, that they cannot see the truth, but by the iust iudgement of God, have bound up the power of their wils, so as they will not be made to see it when they doe see it.

Againe it being so, that where deceivers fasten on any people or person, they spoile them. Let this teach us not onely to avoyd seducers, but to affect the truth, and to receive the truth in love of the truth: for indeed because men receive not the love of the truth, hence it is (as the Apostle hath taught us, 2 Theff. 2. 11.) that God sends them strong delusions to beleieve lies, even such delusions as strongly deceive them, and strongly hold them, being deceived: for so much the words doe import, *ἐν ἰσχυρῇ πλάνῃ καὶ ἐν ἰσχυρῇ κρατῇ τοῦ θεοῦ*. That the Lord sends upon them such errors, as not onely prevaile with them, but are powerfull and strong to hold them, having erred, so as they have neither power, nor will to winde themselves out, but thinke themselves in happy case and right, when they are most wrong, and so goe on stiffe and stubborne against the truth, and against their owne good, till they perish and bee damned in hell: let this bee thought on, and let it stirre us up to receive the truth in love of the truth, and to testifie our love to the truth. Let us hate and detest all contrary error, as *David* saith he did, *Psal. 119. 104.* having gotten understanding of the truth, he hated all wayes of falshood.

Come we to the first particular meanes here set downe, whereby seducers use to prey upon poore Christians (namely) Philosophy and vaine deceit. The Papists in their notes on this place, charge us to bee such as advance Philosophy above the due place, and say we have no other arguments against the reall presence in the Sacrament of the Lords supper: but such as are borrowed from Philosophy, concerning quantity, place, position, dimensions, sight, taste and other straites of reason, which indeed is a meere cavill and slanderous imputation: for we have many other arguments against that carnall presence, both out of Scripture, and out of ancient Divines. And againe, wee bring no arguments out of Philosophy, but such as have ground in Scripture, the Scripture teaching that Christ was truly incarnate, and had a true body like unto ours, and had all the essentiall properties of a true body. Wee hence conclude according to the rules of Philosophy, that his body is visible, circumscribed, locally present onely in one place at one time: the ground of our argument is from Scripture and not from Philosophy. Thus farre wee consent with our adversaries, that a doctrine grounded on Philosophy, is a meanes of seduction, and drawing out of the way from the truth of religion, that is cleare from these words of the Apostle, and the reason of it is manifest: because the wisdom of man is blind in matters of religion, as the Apostle saith, *Rom. 1. 22.* when the Philosophers, and wise men among the heathen, professed themselves to be wise in matters of faith and religion, they became fooles. Therefore a doctrine grounded on their writings, must needs be a meanes of seduction, and drawing away from the truth into error. And this we may easily retort and turne backe upon the head of our adversaries, especially the schoole Divines amongst them, who ground many doctrines on Philosophy, as justification by inherent righteousnesse, freedome of will, and divers others.

Let the use of this be thus much unto us, let it teach us to looke to the ground of every doctrine tendered unto us, that it be grounded on the written word of God, the foundation of all true faith: and learne we to suspect speeches cloathed

Vse. 2.

We must not only avoyd seducers, but affect the truth and receive it in love of it.

I. Meanes.

Doct. 3.

A doctrine grounded on philosophy is a meanes of drawing out of the way from the truth of religion.

Reason.

How philosophy is hurtfull to religion.

in philosophical habit, under them many times lies hid much corruption. Let us not then receive things offered unto us in that manner, hand over head, but with examination. I deny not all use of Philosophy, there may be good use of it in divinity. And I will now briefly shew how farre forth Philosophy is pernicious and hurtfull to religion, and how farre forth it is not.

First, therefore know that Philosophy and the learning of the heathen is hurtfull to religion, in that it puts downe some things utterly false and against the word of God: as the eternitie of this world: that chiefe happinesse is found in civill vertue: that vertue is nothing else but a mediocrity or moderation of naturall affection, without renovation or change of them by grace and such like.

Secondly, it is pernicious to religion, in that such things as have their truth in Philosophy and nature, are abused to overturne or corrupt some truth in religion: for example, that of nothing, nothing is made: it is true in nature and reason, but it is false in Divinitie and religion, that teaching vs that God made all things of nothing: that from a privation to an habit there is no returne, hath some truth in philosophy; but in religion it holds not true, because from death to life there is a returne, and there shall be a resurrection of the body: that the iustice and righteousness by which a man is iust & righteous, is formall inherent in himselfe, not in another; as wisdom or learning is in him that is wise or learned, in is true Philosophy, but false in Divinity, because the iustice and righteousness by which we are iust and righteous in the sight of God, is not inherent in us but it is the righteousness of Christ imputed unto us. Many other instances might be given, but these may sufficiently cleare it, that Philosophy is dangerous to religion, in that such things as have truth in Philosophy are abused, to overturne or to corrupt some truth in religion.

How philosophy is not hurtfull, but rather helpfull to religion.

Now on the other side, Philosophy and the science of naturall things, and morall vertues delivered by Heathen men, is not hurtfull to religion, in things there truely delivered, and used as a servant unto Divinity, and so as it may be a meanes to further us in the knowledge of God: and of heavenly things, for certainly the knowledge of naturall things and morall vertues may helpe in the knowledge of things heavenly and divine: the Scripture it selfe doth sometimes send us to the teaching of Nature, and of naturall things, 1 Cor. 11. 14. saith the Apostle, *Doth not nature it selfe teach you, that if a man have long haire, it is a shame unto him?* Christ himselfe sends his followers to the fowles of the aire and to the lillies of the field, to learne that excellent point of the providence of God, in the preservation of them: the booke of *Iob* is full of arguments from things naturall, to manifest and make knowne the infinite wisdom and power of God and there is no doubt, but that *Moses* and *Daniel* being instructed in the wisdom of the *Aegyptians*, and *Caldeans*, they made good use of that knowledge. Let no man then simply condemne Philosophy, and all liberall Arts and Sciences, as some foolishly doe, but so farre forth Philosophy puts downe things utterly false, or as the rules of it are abused, to overthrow or corrupt some truth in religion.

We are to profit by our knowledge of naturall things.

Let us learne to profit by our knowledge of any naturall thing: let our knowledge of a thing naturall, serve as a step to ascend by, to the knowledge and consideration of some things heavenly and spirituall: for example, we know that the eye hath a faculty and power of seeing; let us thereby bee led forward to consider that there is an eye in heaven that sees more.

That in God the Creator and maker of the eye, there is a power of seeing all things. Thus did *David* reason, *Psal. 94. 9. He that formed the eye, shall he not see?* he riseth up from a consideration of sight given to the eye, to consider the all-seeing eye of Gods providence; wee knowing that there is in man a conscience that doth checke him for notorious knowne finnes (as it doth, if it bee not hardened and cast asleepe by custome of sinne). This ought to leade us along to consider

consider of a judgement to come, that there shall be a time when God will bring all to judgement. Even our meate, drinke and apparell, are to put us in minde of the necessity of the food of our soules, and the inward habiliments and cloathing of the soule: yea, the grasse of the field, and the flowers of our gardens flourishing for a time, and then fading away, are to put us in mind of the short continuance and fading state of our lives. Thus doing, wee shall walke in earthly things and have heavenly mindes, and make a right use of our philosophy, even of our contemplation and knowledge of naturall things.

Observe with mee one thing further from these words, namely this, that the Apostle calls philosophy (the best learning of the Heathen, thrust upon men) in respect of true comfort and salvation, not onely a deceit, but vaine deceit, a vaine thing, such as hath not in it that soundnesse of comfort, that is haply expected by it.

Hence wee are taught, that the greatest knowledge a man can reach unto in humane learning (if he rest in it, and looke for true comfort by it) it will disappoint him. If a man thinke himselfe happy, and lift himselfe up in regard of his excellent knowledge gotten by his naturall wit, and by study of the best humane learning, he deceives himselfe, he shall vanish away in his owne speculation: for why? true saving and lasting comfort is not there to be found, it is onely found in the knowledge of the Word of God, which is therefore called (and that by way of exclusion, shutting out true comfort from any other word) the word of comfort, and the word of life. Hence it is, that the Saints of God have ever found such delight and sweetnesse in the Word of God, as they have preferred it before the sweetest things, and made it the very ioy of their hearts.

The knowledge that men of the best wits, and by the greatest study come to by humane learning, cannot minister to them any true comfort in time of their outward pressures, and in time of their troubles that lie on their bodies: it can onely tell them this or that trouble is to be borne with patience, because there is a necessity of the bearing of it, being laid upon them, there is no remedy but they must beare it: or it may be, it can goe thus farre, as to tell them that God will have it so: but their knowledge they have by humane learning cannot shew them in that trouble, the good and holy will of God, and the love of God, even in that trouble, and that God is still the same good God unto them in afflicting of them, that he was before he laid that affliction on them. Thus farre it cannot goe (in regard of outward trouble) much lesse can it yeeld true comfort in anguish of soule, or perplexity of minde or conscience.

Now then this being so, that the greatest knowledge a man can attaine by humane learning will disappoint him: if he looke for true comfort from it in time of need, let then as many as take delight (I will not say in reading of vaine and frivolous tales, but in reading true humane histories of this kingdome, or any other, (which I speake not against, it is a commendable thing to reade them:) but this I say, let such as take pleasure and delight in reading of them, learne to moderate their delight, and let them take heede they be not carried away with too much delight in reading of them. It is the corruption of our nature, to be too much tickled with delight, and to place a felicity in reading such histories, and so to spend all the time (we have to spare) in reading of them: but let us learne thus to thinke with our selves; Will the knowledge I get by reading those histories stay me in the day of trouble? Will it comfort mee in the houre of my death? then it is a sure thing, then it is comfortable indeede: but if upon due consideration, we finde it to be vaine and empty of all such comfort, and that if (were it upon it) wee waite upon a flying vanity, and forsake our owne mercy, as the Prophet speakes, *Ierem. 2. 1*. Then let us take lesse delight in turning over such bookes, and seeking after such knowledge, and let us labour to have our hearts possessed with greater delight in reading of Gods Booke,

Doct. 4.

The greatest knowledge in humane learning will disappoint a man if he looke for true comfort by it.

Vse 1.

Such as take delight in reading humane histories, must moderate their delight.

Use 2.

There is no true comfort to be found in naturall knowledge.

which is the volume of true comfort, and will furnish us with such comfort as will stand by us in all times of trouble and distresse, either of body or minde, both in life and death.

Againe, it being so, that the greatest knowledge a man of excellent wit, and with great study hath gotten out of humane Writers, even out of morall Philosophy, which seemes to teach the way to true happinesse, is not able to yield him any dramme of true comfort in time of trouble; what comfort then can such persons finde as rest in their naturall knowledge; I meane in that knowledge they have only by their mother-wit? Some persons will freely confesse they are not booke-learned: and indeed they have not any jot either of humane or diuine knowledge, which they ought to have, and might have had by the meanes long continued amongst them: they know not the distinction of the persons in the Trinity, or at least cannot distinctly tell what any of them hath done for them; they are not acquainted with the properties of God, nor with his actions, they know not his truth, his justice, his power, his mercy, and other his attributes as they are made knowne in his Word: haply they know them as they may be knowne by the light of reason, and so did the Heathen, as the Apostle witnesseth: but alas, that is a comfortlesse knowledge, serving onely to leave them without excuse. Let such as blesse themselves in their naturall knowledge, such as content themselves to know God and the things of God, as they may be knowne by a naturall man, let them consider that when trouble comes upon them, they shall be left destitute and void of comfort, especially when trouble of mind comes, they shall then have nothing to oppose to the accusation of a guilty conscience, nothing to the burning wrath and fearefull displeasure of God, but shall lie open to feare, trembling and desperation, to voluntary death, yea, to lay violent hands upon themselves.

Let these things be thought on, and let them stirre us up not to rest in such knowledge of God, and the things of God, as wee have by the light of nature, which is comfortlesse, and will then disappoint us of comfort, when wee have most neede of it: but let us labour for that knowledge which is offered, and may be had from the Word of God, which will be sure to afford us true and sound comfort, even in the greatest conflict of minde and conscience that can befall us.

2 Meanes.

Interpretation.

Doct. 5.

Doctrines meereley invented by men, spoile such as embrace them.

Reason.

Come wee to the second meanes used by seducers to deceive, namely, traditions of men, *through philosophy, and vaine deceit, through the traditions of men, by traditions of men, &c.* The Apostle in this place meanes such doctrine, rules, or precepts as were meereley devised by men, either contrary, or beside the written Word of God, in the case of religion. We may find, *Matth. 15. 9.* that traditions are called mens precepts or rules, meereley invented by men: and *ver. 3.* such as crosse and thwart the commandements of God, such as be contrary, or at least besides the written Word of God.

Hence then doth the Apostle give us this conclusion: That such doctrines in the case of religion are as meere inventions of men, having no ground in the written Word of God: they spoile such as embrace them, and draw them away from the truth into error.

The reason is plaine: because the written Word of God is a perfect rule both of faith and manners, and containes all things needfull to be knowne, believed, or practised: it is sufficiently able to make us wise to salvation: *These things are written, that yee might believe that Iesus is the Christ the sonne of God, and that in believing yee might have life through his name, Joh. 20. 31.* And the Apostle saith, *Rom. 15. 4.* *Whatsover things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope: therefore any doctrine added to the doctrine of the word (it being so absolute in itselfe) must needs be a drawing away from the truth into error.*

Now

Now ſuch are the unwritten traditions of the Papiſts, their doctrine touching their Maſſes, Trentalls, Dirges, baſe communions, invocation of Saints, adoration of Images, ſhallowing of Bread, Water, Oile, croſſings, ceremonies, and many more of that ſort, they are all mere inventions of men, and ſuch as embrace them, are drawne from the truth to error: but the Papiſts plead and ſay, Theſe things are not ſo to be taxed, as mere inventions of men.

Be cauſe (ſay they) they were not ordained by mere humane power, but by Chriſt his warrant & authority, by ſuch as are placed over his Church, of whom he ſaith, *hee that heareth you, heareth mee: and hee that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth mee,* Luk. 10. 16. They are appointed by the holy Ghoſt joyning with their Paſtours in the regiment of the Church: this in their colour they ſet upon them.

But to take from them this ſhift: Firſt, they are never able to prove that their teachers have Apoſtollicall power and authority, the ſame that the Aſtoples had, and that they are ſimply to be believed in that they teach, that is a privilege and prerogative belonging onely to the Apoſtles, the planters and founders of the Church of the new Teſtament.

Againe, it is true indeed, Chriſt ſaith, *hee that heareth you, heareth mee, &c.* but how? ſo long as they teach nothing but that Chriſt hath taught: hee doth not aſſure us, whoſoever heareth man being called to teach, heareth him ſimply, whatſoever he teacheth, but ſo long as man preacheth Gods Word: and that appeares, Joh. 14. verſe 16. *The Comforter, which is the holy Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend in my name, hee ſhall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance which I have told you.* Chriſt there promiſeth that his Spirit ſhall ſuggeſt to the mindes of his Diſciples, all things which he had taught them, and not any new Doctrines: therefore the Church of Rome cannot free their written verities from being found mere humane inventions: and wee are to avoid them as things that will ſpoile and draw away from the truth into error, and embrace onely ſuch Doctrines, as are grounded on the written Word of God, which is perfectly able to make us wiſe to ſalvation.

Now to the third meanes uſed by ſeducers to deceive, namely, the Rudiments of the World, according to the Tradition of the World, and not after Chriſt.

Theſe words if they be conſidered with the former, they have reſpect unto them in this manner, that the traditions of men were according to the Rudiments of the world, according to the Rites of the ceremoniall Law: ſo indeede were the traditions and rules of Pharifees touching waſhing of cups, and platters, and the like: but theſe words (beſides the relation) doe imply, that the Rudiments of the world are hurtfull, and ſo make them a third meanes uſed by ſeducers to deceive.

Now the word tranſlated (*Rudiments*) doth properly ſignifie elements: and by Rudiments or Elements, wee are to underſtand the legall Doctrine of Moſes in the old Teſtament, the Rules and Precepts given by Moſes touching circumciſion, Jewiſh ſacrifices, and concerning many Rites, and Ceremonies among the Jewes, as the eating of certaine meates, and abſtaining from other, the obſervation of daies, and times, wearing of this or that kinde of garment. Now theſe legall Precepts and Rules, are called by the Apoſtle, Rudiments, or Elements, by way of ſimilitude, either alluding to the foure elements of the world, fire, aire, earth and water, whereof all perfect bodies under the heavens are compounded, or rather indeede, to the firſt elements of the inſtruction of children to the letters, the A. B. C. or Primar, wherein little children are firſt inſtructed, and thence led forward to the exerciſe and ſtudy of more excellent learning: ſuch were the legall Precepts touching circumciſion, Jewiſh ſacrifices, and the Rites among the Jewes, they were but as the A. B. C. the firſt letters wherein the Jewes were trained up as children for a time, till the coming of Chriſt.

Uſe.

Confutation of popiſh unwritten traditions.

Obiection.

Answer.

3. Meanes.

Interpretation.

Christ. At which time was revealed both to them and the whole world a more excellent doctrine: and that this is the allusion of the Apostle appears plainly, Gal. 4. 3. where speaking of himselfe, and all the Jewes under the Law, he saith, *when we were children, we were in bondage under the rudiments of the world.*

Againe, these legall precepts are said to be rudiments or elements of the world, because they were concerning outward and visible things. Thus then are wee to conceive these words of the Apostle *According to the rudiments of the world*: as if hee had said, according to the precepts and rules given by Moses touching circumcision, Jewish sacrifices, and many outward rites among the Jewes, which were but a *Pedagogie* or an A. B. C. to instruct the Jewes onely for a time, till the coming of Christ, at which time was revealed a full and more plentifull doctrine.

Deff. 6.

The law of ceremonies given by Moses is in some case pernicious to Gods people.

Quest.

Answer.

Now here first let it be considered of us, that these words of the Apostle doe imply, that the legall rules and precepts given by Moses, teaching circumcision, Jewish sacrifices and services under the Law, may be a meanes to spoile people or persons, and to draw them from the truth of Religion, and from Christ to perdition: therefore the Apostle gives warning to the Colossians to beware lest any spoile them, not onely by the rules of Philosophy, and traditions of men, but through the rudiments of the world, through the *Pedagogie* and childish elements of the ceremoniall Law, these being as pernicious and dangerous as the other.

Now it may be demanded how the rules and precepts, and the Law, of ceremonies given by Moses (being part of the written Word of God) should be dangerous.

I answer, when things there prescribed are thrust upon men as being of necessary use and observation, as needfull to be observed, together with faith in Christ: and that appears both by the context and discourse of this place, and by other places of Scripture, Gal. 5. 2, saith the Apostle, *Behold, I Paul say to you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.* It is a speech full of power, wherein the Apostle sets his authority given him by Iesus Christ against the authority of all that teach the contrary, whosoever they be, *Behold, I Paul, who am an Apostle, and have authority to publish the Gospell, say to you, whosoever saith to the contrary, if yee be circumcised, if yee thinke circumcision of necessary use with faith in Christ, in the matter of justification, (for that is the argument there handled by the Apostle) I tell you Christ profit you nothing, you shall have no benefit nor comfort by his death, passion, resurrection, or any thing hee hath done.* A plaine proove of this, that the Law of ceremonies given by Moses, is hurtfull and pernicious, when things there prescribed are urged, as things of necessary use to salvation, together with faith in Christ.

Reason.

And the reason of this is, because things there commanded, are abrogated and taken away by the coming of Christ, not in respect of signification and Scripture, for they may still instruct us concerning Christ, but in regard of use and observation: therefore to hold and use them as things of necessary use, together with faith in Christ, is a meanes to make Christ unprofitable unto us, yea, to draw us from Christ to perdition. The knowledge of this point may thus profit us, not onely to let us see that wee are free from the observation of Jewish ceremonies, and that there is an abrogation of them, but it may further serve to discover unto us, that the holy things of God, such things as have full ground in the Word of God, yea, things of divine institution, being extended beyond their right use, they become pernicious and hurtfull, yea meanes to carry us away as a prey from Christ to everlasting destruction. Thus the Sacraments which God hath ordained to be signes and seals

Vse.

Holy things of God even things of divine institution, being extended beyond their right use become pernicious.

of his covenant of grace, if they be reached out (as they are by the Papists) to further use, as to be Physicall causes of grace, to be things that containe and give grace to the receivers, by the very act and worke of receiving, they become dangerous things, and in stead of ministring comfort, they become meanes to make (Christ the fountaine of all comfort) unprofitable to us.

I might yet further insist in the fruits and workes of the Spirit, as Prayer, Almes-deeds, and such like: yea saith it selfe, if it be extended further than to be an instrument apprehending Gods mercy, and the merit of Christ to sanctification, as to be a meritorious and deserving cause of justification, and salvation, it becomes dangerous and deadly, and this is carefully to be observed of us: for it is a subtilty of the Divell, when he cannot make men lightly to esteeme the holy things of God, and to use them for fashion or custome, then to be tempering with them on the other hand, to make them to extend them to further use than God hath appointed: Thus hee dealt with Christ our head in his tentations, as appeares, Match. 4. by conferring of the third and sixth verses together, when hee could not weaken his faith in the providence of God, and make him distrust, then hee laboured with him to extend his trust (in the act of it) too farre, even to presume on the providence God, and to neglect the meanes; thus (no doubt) hee will be dealing with the members of Christ: we must therefore labour to know and discern the right use of all holy things of God, and to take heed that the Divell or his instruments prevaile not with us to extend beyond the same: for so doing, we doe not onely abuse the holy things themselves, and make them unprofitable unto us, but they become meanes to spoile us, to draw us from Christ, and make his death and blood-shedding, his resurrection, his victory our sinfull death, and the Divell, utterly void unto us, and yeelding no profit nor comfort unto us at all. Wee are further to marke, that the Apostle call the legal Doctrine of Moses, (*rudiments or elements*) or the A. B. C. of the Law, and that in respect of the more full and perfect doctrine afterward revealed in time of the Gospell. Hence we may take our this conclusion:

That the teaching under the Law was nothing so excellent as the teaching under the Gospell: they that lived in time of the Law, were but as young scholars in some petty schoole: wee that now live under the new Testament, are as students of some famous Vniversity; we (by the teaching of the Gospell) are led forward to more excellent learning, and more is revealed to us, than to them that lived in time of the old Testament. And this is cleare by many places of Scripture, wee find it to be one maine difference betweene the Law and the Gospell, that the Gospell is a farre more excellent and glorious light than the Law, 2 Cor. 3. from the sixth verse to the end: the Apostle doth preferre the excellency of the teaching of the Gospell, before the doctrine of the Law, in many respects.

But haply some will object and say, This seemes not true; for Abraham and the Prophets had more revealed unto them, than the best of us; yea than the best that have lived since the comming of Christ in the flesh, excepting the Apostles, who were immediatly taught by Christ; therefore they were not ABC-daries, or young scholars in respect of us.

To this I answer: It is true indeed, if wee compare person with person: as Abraham with some one now, or heretofore living since the comming of Christ: Abraham is not a child in respect of such an one, but if wee compare Church with Church; the Christian Church under the new Testament, with the Church of the Jewes under the Law, we shall find that the Christian Church doth farre exceed the Jewes in respect of revelation and excellent knowledge. Hence it is that our Saviour saith, Luke 10. 24. that many Kings and Prophets desired to see the things manifested by his comming and saw them not, and the

Note.

Doff. 7.
The teaching under the Law was nothing so excellent as the teaching under the Gospell.

Objection.

Answer.

Apostle, 1 Pet. 1. 11. 12. saith, that the Prophets enquired and searched, when, or what time the Spirit (which testified before of Christ, which was in them) should declare the sufferings that should come unto Christ, and the glory that should follow, unto whom it was revealed, *that not unto, &c.*

This then remaines a true conclusion, that the teaching under the Law was not so excellent, as the teaching under the Gospell: they that lived in time of the Law, were but as petties and young scholars, in respect of us that live under the Gospell. Now then is the teaching under the Gospell more excellent than the teaching under the law? Is more now revealed to us by the Gospell, than to the Fathers of the old Testament in time of the Law? then certainly our knowledge must be answerable, wee must exceede them in the knowledge of the mysteries of Jesus Christ: the rule is generall, To whom much is committed, of him much shall be required; according to the meanes vouchsafed, so shall be our account returned: ignorance (now in the cleare light of the Gospell) is a most heavie and fearefull sinne; it might in some sort excuse them that lived under the Law, but now it is inexcusable, now it leaves men void of excuse. Ignorant persons have now nothing to plead for themselves, and (that the ugly shape of this sinne may further appeare unto us) consider wee that ignorance, now in time of the Gospell, it is an argument of hardnesse of heart. Wee know that a thing that is often exposed, and set before the bright shining of the sunne, and is neither changed nor mollified, is of a stony nature; so surely such as live in the bright beames of the Gospell, and are neither bettered nor mollified by them, are of a most stony temper: yea, ignorance now doth not onely argue this hardnesse, but it is more than a probable signe of everlasting perdition, so saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 4. 3. *If the Gospell be hid*, if the glorious light of the Gospell doe not enlighten us, but wee continue ignorant of it, it scales up a fearefull conclusion against us, that we are such as are appointed to everlasting destruction, especially if we be wilfully ignorant, as many are, who *in respect of time*, and meanes, *might have been teachers*, as the author to the Hebrewes saith, chap. 5. 12. *and yet had neede to be taught the first principles of Christian Religion*; they are behind the Jewes, they know not their letters, the Rudiments and first Principles of the Word of God, and can they looke to be saved? certainly no, continuing in that state they cannot; their state is worse than theirs of Sodom and Gomorrah, it is the sentence of Christ himselfe, Matth. 10. 15. Let it then stirre them up to use all good meanes to come out of their blindnesse and ignorance: yea, let such of us as have the greatest measure of knowledge, learne (in respect of the cleare light of the Gospell) to bewaile the remnants of ignorance that be in us, and be carefull daily more and more to increase in knowledge, that we may be answerable to our meanes and condition.

Come we to the last words of this verse, [*and not after Christ.*] These words are opposed to the three meanes of seducement before specified, as a generall refutation of them all: and the meaning is briefly this: that they are not according to the Doctrine of Christ in the Gospell. The point of instruction that ariseth hence is this.

Doct. 8.

This ought to prevaile with us to renounce every corruption both of life and doctrine that it is not according to the doctrine of the Gospell.

Vse.

That it ought ever to be a powerfull and sufficient reason to sway with us against any corruption, either of life or doctrine, that it is not after Christ, and that it is not according to the doctrine of the Gospell, Ephes. chap. 4. verse 20. the Apostle doth use this as a speciall argument against the corruptions and manners of the Gentiles, to dissuade the Ephesians now converted, not to follow their fashions, hee saith, that they had not so learned Christ, meaning that such things were not suitable to the Doctrine of Christ, and therefore to be avoided: and this manner of reasoning we are to use.

When wee are assaulted by Satan, and tempted to any corruption and sinne, we are to thinke and say with our selves, Surely this is not according to Christ, and

and if wee have truly learned Christ, it will be a notable meanes to avoyd it, and especially this manner of reasoning is to be used in time of some grievous conflict of conscience, when the conscience wassleth with despaire, when the Law accuseth, terrifieth and threateneth the wrath of God; then will the divell set Christ before us as an angry Judge, saying unto us in this manner; This thou oughtest to have done, and thou hast not done it; know therefore that I will take vengeance on thee: we are then to remember, that this is not according to the doctrine of the Gospell. Christ doth not speake there on this manner to poore afflicted consciences, hee addeth not affliction to be afflicted, hee breakes not a bruised reed: but unto poore afflicted consciences, labouring under the burthen of sinne, Christ himselfe in the Gospell speakes most lovingly and comfortably, and saith, *Come unto mee all ye that are weary and laden, and I will ease you*, Matth. 11. 28. *Be of good comfort my sinners, thy sinnes be forgiven thee*, Matth. 9. 2. *Be not afraid, I have overcome the world*, Joh. 16. 33. Wee are therefore thus to reason in time of conflict of conscience: and if wee be able thus to doe, it will be a notable comfort and refreshing unto us, in the greatest conflict that can be.

Verse 9. *For in him dwelleth all the fulnesse of the God-head bodily.*

THis verse dependeth on the former, as a reason to prove that Philosophy, the traditions of men, the rudiments of the world, and all other things, are meere deceit and vanity, and altogether needlesse in the matter of salvation, and that all things needfull to salvation are to be found in Christ: the reason is taken from the sufficiency and perfection of Christ, that in him is all perfection and sufficiency to salvation to be found: therefore all other things are needlesse. Now this sufficiency and perfection found in Christ is propounded in this verse, and applyed to the Colossians in the next: and it is not barely propounded in this verse, but laid downe in the prooffe of it, and that from the condition of the person of Christ, that Christ is both perfect God, and perfect man, united into one person, and therefore most perfect and all-sufficient to salvation: that is the respect that these words have to the former and the summe of them: [*in him*] that is, in Christ [*the God-head*] that is, the very divine essence and nature, not onely the grace of God, but the very God of Grace himselfe; the Apostle addes further the fulnesse of the God-head, thereby signifying the full and perfect God-head, the perfect substance, nature, and essence of the God-head: and yet further hee saith [*all*] his meaning in the enlargement is this, that the whole perfect essence of the God-head is in Christ, not onely perfect wisdom, perfect power, perfect justice, perfect mercy, &c. but that the perfection and fulnesse of all these together, and of every essentiall property of the God-head is in him; yea that the same whole glory and majesty of the God-head, that is in God the Father, is in Jesus Christ his Sonne [*dwelleth*] that is, abideth and continueth united for ever: the Apostle speaking in the present time, signifieth a continuall residence and abode [*bodily*]. This word *bodily*, is here used after the Greeke phrase: the phrase of the Grecians, who use to put *σῶμα*, that signifieth a body, to signifie not only a thing that hath a true being, as a body hath, but a person: and we in our English tongue use the word *body* for a person, as some body, or no body, we use to say for some person, or no person: the meaning then of the Apostle in saying *bodily*, is, essentially, and personally united to his manhood, that there is a true union of the Godhead and manhood in Christ, that they are made one person, and so the essence of the Godhead in Christ, being in it selfe incorporeall, is (after a sort by the personall union) become corporate, they are the words of the holy Ghost, Joh. 1. 14. *the Word was made flesh*, the eternall Word, the Son of God, the second person in Trinity was incarnate, and made

When Satan tempteth us to any corruption and sinne, we are to use this kinde of reasoning.

Interpre-
sation

made man. Thus then are we to understand this sentence of the Apostle, as if he had said: For in Christ the whole most perfect essence and substance of the God-head abideth for ever, united truly and personally to his man-hood, so as God and man in Christ make one person.

In this verse thus laid open and conceived, are found most excellent points of doctrine: and before I come to speake of the particular things contained in it, we are briefly to observe and marke the argument of the Apostle: whereby hee proves that all sufficiency to salvation is found in Christ, and no where else, taken from the fulnesse of the God-head dwelling in him. For thus reasoneth the Apostle, Christ is true and perfect God as well as man, and therefore a perfect mediator, and all sufficiency to salvation is found in him only.

Hence wee may gather this point of Doctrine: That the ground of all sufficiency in Christ, is his God-head: the God-head of Christ is that which makes him a most sufficient Redeemer, and Saviour: for indeed, hence it is that his blood is so precious, that the shedding of it is satisfactory and meritorious, able by the merit of it to purge, cleanse, and wash us from sinne, as S. Iohn saith, 1 Ioh. 1. 7. *the blood of Iesus Christ his sonne cleanseth us from all sinne*: wee are to marke his speech, he saith, the blood of Iesus Christ the sonne of God, is that which cleanseth us from all sinne: and hence it is, even from the God-head, that the flesh of Christ though it profit nothing in it selfe, yet by vertue which it receiveth from the God-head, to which it is ioyned by personall union, it is the bread of life, and quickning flesh, Ioh. 6. 58. Yea hence it is that Christ his righteousness, his perfect fulfilling of the Law is available for righteousness, to every true believer, because hee is God as well as man, and so not bound to fulfill the Law for himselfe, but of his owne accord hee became the end and perfection of the Law, and fulfilled it *for righteousness to every one that believeth*, Rom. 10. 4. This doctrine is to be thought upon.

And for the use of it, it may serve to answer and silence the reasoning of the flesh, against the sufficiency of Christ his death and suffering: for our owne corrupt reason will teach us to argue against the sufficiency of Christ, his death after this manner: Christ his suffering was but for a time and wee by our sinnes deserve eternall death and punishment in hell for ever; how then can Christ his temporary suffering answer and satisfie for our deserved eternall punishment: betwene that which is finite, in respect of time, and that which is infinite in continuance, betwene temporary and endlesse, there is no proportion. For answering of this cavill of the flesh, the doctrine now delivered may helpe us, and we are to remember it: in the honre of censation we may have neede to remember it: therefore let us thinke on it now before the triall come, that the ground of all sufficiency in Christ is his God-head: and therefore wee are not to esteeme the merit of his death, by the time of his sufferings, but by the person who suffered: that Christ who suffered was both God and man, united in one person, and by vertue of his God-head gave power to his death to be meritorious, and of infinite price and value: and hence the Church is said to be purchased *with the blood of God*, Act. 20. 28. and 1 Cor. 2. 8. *that the Lord of glory was crucified*: the meaning of those places is not, that God suffered, at shed blood, he being impossible, and having no blood to shed: but they doe note out unto us the infinite merit and sufficiency of Christ his death in respect of his God-head, that the person suffering being not a meere man but God and man, his death was made infinitely sufficient, and effectually, by vertue of his God-head personally united to his man-hood, and so was a sufficient satisfaction for the sinnes of the whole world. And so I come to the particular things offered unto us in this verse: and first wee are hence to take knowledge of the perfect deity and God-head of Christ, in that the Apostle saith, *all fulnesse of the God-head dwells in him*.

Doctr. 1.
The ground of
all sufficiency
in Christ is his
God-head.

Use.
Strength a-
gainst the rea-
soning of the
flesh touching
the sufficiency
of the death
and suffering
of Christ.

We are taught that Christ is true God, yea of the same most glorious eternall essence and substance with the Father, and hee is God of himselfe, equall to his Father: and this is cleare by many places of Scriptures: that one is an excellent place to this purpose, Philippians 2.6. where the Apostle saith, that Christ *Iesus being in the forme of god, thought it no robbery to be equall with God:* that is, being in the glory and majestie of God, before his incarnation, he knew it to be no violence, iniurie, or vsurpation to be equall with God, for he was (indeede and truth) God of himselfe and of equall maiestie and glory with his Father from all eternitie. I might further proue this by many reasons, as by the propheticall predictions of Gods Prophets, spoken only of the Lord of hosts, and applied by the Apostles to Christ: by the workes of God truly imputed to Christ, as to make the world, to forgiue sinnes, to know the hearts of men and the like: by his miracles: and many moe reasons might be brought to proue the eternall Godhead of Christ, that he is true God of himselfe, equall to his Father, if it were needfull.

But come we to make use of this poynt, and first this being a truth grounded on the word of God, it may not only settle vs against many erroneous opinions, which I will not now remember: but it may serue to cleere the doctrine of our Church, from a most vile and slanderous imputation cast upon it by the Papists, they sticke not to charge the doctrine of our Church to bee faulty in no lesse than the highest degree of Atheisme, because wee teach this very point.

That Christ is God of himselfe, and that hee received not his Godhead from his Father. Against this, one in a popish pamphlet cries out and saith, Vpon this position it followeth, that there is neither Father nor Sonne in the Godhead: and why so? marke his reason, For (saith hee) according to common sense (see, common sense is the ground hee builds upon in so high a mystery) hee only is a true naturall sonne, that by generation doth receive his nature and substance from his Father: if therefore the second person in Trinity did not receive the Godhead from the first, but had it of himselfe, as the Protestants doe affirme, then certainly hee is no true sonne of the first, and consequently the first person is no true Father: and thus (saith hee) they overthrow both Father and Sonne in the Trinity, and are found faulty in the highest degree of Atheisme. A foule fault indeed, if it were justly charged upon us. But to cleere us from this blot, and to answer him: first, it seemes this cavilling Sophister cannot, or will not distinguish betweene Christs Godhead and his person: for wee teach that Christ his Godhead is of it selfe, that Christ in regard of his Godhead is of himselfe, as well as the Father, but that his person or Sonship (as I may so speake) is from the Father, as Christ is the second person in Trinity, and the eternall Sonne, so is he from the Father, that is our doctrine, and so the popish argument is not to the purpose.

Againe, this cavillers argument stands onely on sense, and reason, not on the word of God: and I answer further unto him, that the strict urging of the naturall generation of man, as a patterne of the spirituall and unspeakeable generation of the Sonne of God, is most absurd: for it will make the Sonne a distinct God from the Father, yea, it will make Christ an inferiour God to God his Father, because the Father shall have his Godhead of himselfe, and the Sonne not of himselfe, but of his Father: which things are in no wise to be granted: wee are to renounce them as utterly false, and to hold it for a truth, grounded on the word of God, that Christ is true God, yea, God of himselfe, equall to his Father.

For a second use of this point, we are to build up our selves in the comfort of this truth: it is a truth full of sweet comfort to as many as truly beleeve in Christ.

Doct. 2.
Christ is true God of the same most glorious essence and substance with the Father and is God of himselfe.

Reason.

Use.
The doctrine of our Church cleered from an imputation which the Papists cast upon it.

Note.

Use 3.
A ground of sweet comfort to all true believers.

And

And the consideration of this, that Christ is true God, may minister to them, not onely this comfort, that they are made one with him by faith, who is the ever springing fountaine of all comfort, who is able to save and deliver them from death and damnation, from the Devill and all the enemies of their salvation, which is a great comfort: but it may raise up their hearts with further comfort, as namely this, that they are one with him, who is most willing to save them, yea, that will be sure to conferre and bestow upon them righteousness, and life everlasting: for why? they are one with him who is true God, in whom is all fulnesse and perfection not onely of power, but of mercy and goodness, favour, and loving kindnesse, who is not onely most powerfull but most gracious and ready to doe them good, and will never suffer them to perish: and this is Christ his owne argument of comfort, and of assurance that none of his shall perish, nor the power of hell ever prevaile against them, that *hee and his father are one*, Ioh. 10.30. In the two verses before hee saith, *I will give unto them eternall life, &c.* then followeth the ground of all, vers. 30. *I and my father are one*: as if he had said, I and my father are one in substance, will, power, &c. therefore none shall plucke my sheepe out of my hand, none shall bee able to take them out of my fathers hand.

A ground of exceeding great comfort to all that truly beleve in Christ. It is no marvell though the Papists, who teach the doctrine of doubting of salvation, teach also that Christ is not God of himselfe, but received his Godhead from his Father. These two things sort and fute well together, let us learne to know and embrace this truth that Christ is true God, even God of himselfe, equall to his Father, and it will yeeld us singular comfort, and assurance that wee shall never perish, if we truly beleve in him: we shall finde sweet comfort in it both in life and death.

Doct. 3.
There is a real distinction of the two natures in Christ.

The next thing offered unto us in this verse, is, in that the Apostle saith, *the fulnesse of the Godhead dwelleth in Christ*: in that word (*dwelleth*) the Apostle doth give us to understand, that the Godhead of Christ is a distinct nature from his manhood: for who knowes not that the dweller differs, and is really distinguished from the house? When therefore the Apostle saith, the fulnesse of the Godhead dwelleth in Christ, hee would have us to know that howsoever God and man make one person in Christ, yet there is a reall distinction of the two natures in Christ, there is neither mixture of one nature with the other: as when water is mingled with wine, neither any conversion of one into the other: the Godhead is distinct in essence from the Manhood, and the Manhood likewise from the Godhead, and both natures still remaine without mixture of one with another, and without conversion of one into another, and the properties of both natures remaine incommunicable.

Vse.
It is an error to confound the two natures in Christ.

This I note in a word, to teach us to take heed of confounding the two natures in Christ: it is the error of some to give the divine essentiall properties of the Godhead to the Manhood, as the majestie and omnipresence of the Deitie to the humanitie of Christ, and so they make his body every where present: wee are to take heed of this confounding the two natures, and learne wee to know that they are really distinct one from another in essence, in properties, and actions, though the actions of both are conjoynded and not to bee put asunder in the worke of our redemption: Christ according to both natures joyntly together is our Mediatour, and the works of Christ, as our Mediatour, are the workes of both natures. Wee are further to consider the fulnesse of the Godhead not only dwelling, but as the Apostle saith, dwelling in Christ bodily, that is, abiding for ever, united truly and personally to his Manhood. Hence two things are offered unto us.

First, the union of the two natures, the Godhead, and the Manhood.
Secondly, the manner of that union.

For

For the first, the God-head of Christ is united to his man-hood, and the divine nature, and humane nature in Christ are conjoynded, and doe concurre, and make one perfect Mediatour, is cleare, not only from this Text, but from many other places of Scripture, Isa. chap. 7. vers. 14. the Prophet foretelling the conception and birth of Christ, saith, *Behold, the Virgin shall conceive, and beare a sonne, and shee shall call his name Emmanuel:* (that is) God with us men, even God and man conjoynded and made one as it is expounded by the Angel, Matth. chap. 1. vers. 23. and Luke chap. 1. vers. 35. the Angell speaking to Mary, saith, *that holy thing which shall be borne of thee, shall be called the Sonne of God:* hee foretells that the Sonne of God should be borne of the Virgin, and so be both the Sonne of God, and the Sonne of the Virgin, God and man conjoynded in one and the same Christ, and to this agrees also that of the Apostle, Gal. chap. 4. vers. 4. *God sent forth his Sonne,* and that sonne *made of a woman,* wherein hee shewes, that Christ is the Sonne of God, and the sonne of a woman, both natures meeting together, making one perfect Mediatour: the Scripture is plentiful in the prooffe of this, that in Christ the divine and humane nature concurre and make one perfect Mediatour.

And for use, this may serve as a ground of excellent comfort; it may not only yeeld us comfort in respect of reconciliation made betweene God and man, as the Prophet saith, Amos 3. 3. *Can two walke together except they be agreed?* so, can God dwell with man (as the Apostle here speaks) unless there be a reconciliation betweene them? but it may further cheere up our hearts, that in respect of that union of the two natures in Christ, the God-head and the manhood, we may come to be partakers of all the merits of Christ, and to have communion and fellowship with God, wherein standeth all true happinesse and comfort: for why? it is Christ his God-head that makes all his obedience both active and passive, the obedience of his life and death meritorious, and effectually, and by his manhood wee come to be partakers of it, if wee truly believe in Christ. The God-head of Christ is as the fountaine whence floweth all good things, righteousness, life and salvation: and his flesh and manhood is (as it were) the conduit pipe, by which these good things, and all graces are conveyed and communicated unto us: yea, wee cannot by faith be made one with Christ as hee is God, but by his flesh. A true believer is first by faith joynded to the flesh of Christ, and doth first apprehend the humane flesh of Christ, and by his flesh is united to his God-head. For as there is no union nor coniunction, no communion with God, but by a Mediatour; so there is no union nor communion with the Godhead of Christ, but by his flesh, wherein he performed the office of a Mediatour; therefore the Apostle calls Christ Jesus the Mediatour betweene God and man, *the Man Christ Jesus*, 1 Tim. 2. 5. giving us to understand, that howsoever Christ is a Mediatour, both as he is God, and as he is man, yet he performed the chiefe duties of a Mediatour in his humane nature, united to his God-head, and so by his flesh apprehended by faith, we come to be made one with his God-head, and by Christ as man, wee come to have fellowship and communion with God, the fountaine of all goodnesse: herein then lies matter of great comfort, that in Christ his divine and humane nature are conioynded, and doe concurre to make one Mediatour, and in Christ is found not onely sufficiency of grace and merit unto life and salvation, in respect of the fulnesse of his God-head, but that sufficient grace and merit is communicated to us by the flesh of Christ, and wee believing in Christ, are made partakers of it by the manhood of Christ; yea, we being made one by faith with the man-hood of Christ, are also by his man-hood made one with his God-head, and have fellowship and communion with God, and have right and title to all the benefits of Christ, and to life eternall, as our Saviour saith, Ioh. 6. 54. *Who soever eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternall life,*

B b

Doct. 5.

The God-head and man-hood in Christ are conjoynded and doe make one perfect Mediatour.

Vse.

Comfort to all true believers.

Note.

Christ is a Mediatour in respect of both his natures.

and I will raise him up at the last day: (that is) whosoever by faith takes hold of my flesh, hath eternall life, &c. and this is a ground of excellent comfort to all true believers.

Doct. 5.
The God-head of Christ is truly and personally united to the man-hood.

Note.

Use 1.
Our nature in Christ is highly advanced, and wee are to take notice of it.

Use 2.
From the union of the God-head and man-hood into one person in Christ, we are to take notice of the greatness and pollution of sin.

Come we to the next thing, namely the manner of the union of the two natures in Christ, in that the Apostle saith, the fulnesse of the God-head dwells bodily in Christ; hee would have us to understand that the God-head is truly and personally united to his man-hood, so as God and man in Christ make one person, and one substance: and for the better conceiving of this manner of union, wee are to consider that God is in Christ, and so dwells in him, as hee is not in any creature whatsoever; for God is in all creatures both good and bad, by his essence, presence and power sustaining them in their being, life, motions, and actions; and in his Saints on earth by his grace, and worke of his love; in his Angels and Saints in heaven by the fulnesse of glory; but onely in the man-hood of Christ is the fulnesse of the God-head bodily, that is, by personall union, and (that is) so as the man-hood being not a person in it selfe, but onely a nature, is received into unity of person with the second person in Trinity, and doth wholly and only subsist in the same person: and this is taught by that of *Iohn*, chap. 1. vers. 14. *The Word was made flesh, and God manifested in the flesh, &c.* *1 Tim.* 3. 16. which places are thus to be understood, that the second person in the Trinity tooke to him selfe the nature of man into unity of person, and so became incarnate, and God and man were united into one person; and one speciall reason of this personall union, namely, of the union of the God-head and man-hood into one person is this: Because the same person that undertooke to answer for the finnes of Gods chosen, and to redeeme them from hell, was both to suffer and to satisfie for them; and therefore it was that Christ was both God and man united into one person: man, that he might suffer; and God, that he might satisfie: I might here runne into many intricate questions; but I labour (as much as the matter in hand will suffer me) to be plaine.

And for the use of this point, I might here stand upon a difference between Christ his workes and ours: admit our workes to be perfect, and according to the exact rule of Gods Law, that his workes were meritorious, because he was God and man in one person, ours are not though they were perfect, because we are but meere men, and one with God onely by faith, and the bond of his Spirit, but I passe by that: and first of all, hence wee may see the advancement of our nature even above the Angells; for Christ tooke not the Angells, but the seed of *Abraham*, *Hebr.* 2. 16. and so advanced our nature above the Angels: yea, our nature in Christ doth excell all creatures, in wisdom, goodness, holiness, power, majesty, and glory; yea, the man-hood of Christ by reason of the personall union with his God-head is to be worshipped with religious and divine worship; and when we pray unto Christ, wee are to pray unto him as God and man; the man-hood for it selfe, and of it selfe, is not to be worshipped with religious worship, because it is a creature, but as it is received into unity of person with his God-head, it is to be worshipped with one and the same worship that the God-head is; as the Author to the *Hebrewes* saith, chap. 1. verse 6. when he bringeth in his first begotten Sonne into the world, hee saith, *and let all the Angels of God worship him.*

Againe, for a second use of this point, hence wee may learne to know the greatness, the hainous and the horrible pollution of sinne, it being such, as no creature was able to satisfie for it; neither Saint nor Angell, no not all the Saints and Angells in heaven and earth were able to make satisfaction to God for the least sinne; but onely Christ Jesus, God and man in one person. Doe but duly weigh and consider with thy selfe, that the person that must satisfie for the least of thy finnes, and appease the wrath of God for the same, must be God manifested in the flesh; even God receiving the nature of man into unity of his person,

person, and thou shalt see the fearefull and ugly shape of sinne, that God hates it with an exceeding hatred, yea, thou shalt see thy selfe (as thou art indeed in thy selfe) a childe of wrath and destruction, corrupted and cut off from God, and in a most miserable condition. Men commonly esteeme some sinnes light and trifling, as customary swearing, breaking the Sabbath, idlenesse, wanton jesting, foolish and unfavoury speaking, and the like: but indeed these sinnes are of such waight, as they puld downe the Sonne of God from heaven, and hee must come downe from his throne of Maiesty and Glory, and take our nature upon him and receive it into unity of person with his Godhead, and in that nature suffer the most shamefull death of the crosse, and powre out his most precious blood to satisfie for these and the like sinnes: yea remember we, that the blood of God and man, even of that person who is both God and man, (and so it may safely be said, according to the phrase of Scripture) that the blood of God and man in one person must be shed before satisfaction could be made for the least of our sinnes, and then we shall see the greatnesse and ugliness of every sinne, and seeing it, let us learne to make conscience of every sinne, even of the least sinne in thought, word, and deed.

Verf. 10. *And ye are compleat in him, which is the head of all principality and power.*

IN this verse the Apostle comes first to apply that sufficiency to salvation, that is found in Christ, and proved to be in Christ in the verse before, to the Colossians, presuming them to be true beleivers, and that in the first words of this verse, *And ye are compleat in him*: as if he had said, there is sufficiency to be found in Christ, in that the fulnesse of the Godhead dwells in him bodily, and you beleiving in him, you are made partakers of it, and you are compleat and have fulnesse and perfection to salvation in Christ; then followes a declaration of Christ his glory in his advancement above the Angels, in those words, *that he is the head of all principality and power*: wherein is also enfolded another reason to prove Christ his sufficiency to salvation, and the Apostle used this forme and manner of reasoning from the advancement of Christ above the Angels, to prove him to be most sufficient to salvation, because the false teachers laboured to strike the Colossians with admiration of the glory of Angels, to bring in the worship of Angels, which the Apostle speaks against, vers. 18. therefore here he bends his speech to the due advancement of Christ above the Angels, and thence takes his argument that Christ is the head of the Angels, and therefore most sufficient to salvation: and they ought not to seeke for any thing needfull to salvation in the Angels, or in any thing out of Christ.

That is the summe of this verse, and the parts of it are;
First, an application of that sufficiency to salvation that is found in Christ to the beleiving Colossians, in the first words, *And ye are compleat in him*.

Secondly, a declaration of the glory of Christ in his advancement above the Angels, including a further reason to prove him sufficient to salvation, in those words, *which is the head of all principality and power*.

Come we to the words of this verse: the word here translated (*compleat*) signifies filled or replenished: the Apostle having before spoken of a fulnesse in Christ, hee goes on in the same manner of speaking, and saith, *ye are compleat*, or, *ye are filled in him*; his meaning is, ye beleiving in Christ have compleat, full, and perfect salvation in him, & need not seeke for any thing out of him, as a complement to make up our justification and salvation. This exposition is most agreeable to the context and discourse of this place (*head*) the word (*head*) is here put to signifie the emicence, and excellency of Christ above the Angels, and the meaning is, Lord, and gouernour, to whom all principality and power

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Interpretation.

is subject, hee being farre exalted above all principality and power: by *principality and power*, wee are to understand the good Angells, who are set downe by these names, not as titles of order, as I shewed, chap. 1. 16. but by way of similitude, to signifie the glory and office of good Angells, by whom Christ doth execute and performe many great and mighty workes, as it were by Princes, Potentates and Rulers. Thus then wee are to understand the Apostle in this verse, as if he had thus spoken: And yee believing Colossians have compleat, full, and perfect salvation in him, and neede nothing to perfect and make up your justification, and salvation, out of him, who is the Lord and Governour of these glorious mighty and powerfull creatures the good Angells.

Doct. 1.

True believers neede nothing out of Christ to their justification and salvation.

Now from these words thus understood, wee are first taught thus much. That true believers need nothing to their justification and salvation out of Christ: such as truly believe in Christ, have full, compleat, and perfect righteousness and salvation in him, and need not any thing out of him, as a complement of their justification and salvation. For why? they are perfectly justified by Christ, they have full and perfect remission of their sins, so as, *there is no condemnation to them*, Rom. 8. 1. and *they are made the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. therefore they need nothing out of Christ to their salvation.

Againe, all the workes of mediation wrought by Christ, are most absolute and perfect, and need nothing to be added and adjoynd, as a supplement unto them to make them perfect: for Christ being God and man is a most perfect Saviour, and therefore he doth perfectly iustifie, and save all that truly believe in him. The holy Ghost saith, Hebr. 7. 25. *he is able perfectly to save them that come unto God by him, but ever liveth to make intercession for them.*

Vse.

Confutation of humane merits and satisfaction.

Where then is any place for humane merits and satisfaction? Surely, there is no place left unto them: wee truly believing in Christ, need not to seeke satisfaction and remission of sins, any where but in Christ: in him wee have full and perfect remission. The Masses, pilgrimages and other workes of penance, which the Papists hold able to satisfie, doe mightily derogate from the one, full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice of Christ once offered upon the Crosse, Heb. 10. 14. *with one offering hath hee consecrated* (or as the word is) *perfected for ever them that are sanctified*: that sentence is worthy to be duly considered, our meditations are to dwell upon it, with one offering hath hee consecrated, and for ever: no need then is there of any thing at any time out of Christ. And againe, consider that the perfect satisfaction made by one offering of Christ, belongs to them that are sanctified, that is also to be considered, and marked of us, to keepe us from abusing this doctrine, that true believers need nothing to their iustification and salvation out of Christ: for our corruption will be ready to abuse this doctrine, and teach us to thinke thus with our selves, Is nothing needfull to our iustification and salvation out of Christ? then a sanctified holy life is needlesse: wee must take knowledge from this worthy sentence of the holy Ghost; that this is a foolish and deceiving kinde of reasoning, it is all one as if thus wee should reason, nothing is needfull to iustification, and salvation out of Christ, and therefore wee will not have Christ himselfe: for such as are not sanctified, have not Christ, they have no part in the merit of his death and passion.

How we may be kept from abusing that doctrine that in Christ we have perfect justification and salvation.

Note.

And further take wee knowledge of this, that howsoever a sanctified life is not needfull to salvation, in respect of any merit, yet it is needfull in respect of assurance of salvation, and in regard of the degree of glory in heaven: the greater our sanctification is, the greater shall be our glory in heaven: therefore learne wee to hold the truth of the doctrine now delivered, with the right use of it, let us content our selves with Christ alone, with his obedience, as most sufficient to our iustification and salvation, even despising in respect of him all other merits and satisfactions whatsoever: yet so as wee ever remember to whom

whom the merit of his death and perfect obedience belongs, namely, to them that are sanctified; and that a sanctified life is needfull in respect of assurance of salvation, and in regard of the degree of glory in heaven.

The next thing we are to make is this; the Apostle saith, *ye are compleat in him*, he saith not, *ye are made compleat*, or *made perfect* from him; but in him: hence ariseth this conclusion: that a perfection of true believers in this life, is in Christ, it is not wrought by Christ in themselves, the perfection by which we are perfectly just in this life, is out of our selves in Christ, it is not any perfection infused and powred into us, but a perfection in Christ: even his perfect righteousness inherent and abiding in him, and not powred into us, is our perfection in the sight of God in this life, 2 Corinth. 5. 21. the Apostle saith directly, *We are made the righteousness of God in Christ*. Ephes. 1. 6. he saith, *God by his grace made us accepted or freely beloved*, not through any perfection wrought in us, or righteousness powred into us by that grace, but altogether out of our selves, in his beloved, Philip. 3. 9. the Apostle saith, *but accounted all things but losse and dung, that he might be found in him*; and then he expounds himselfe in the words following, *not having his own righteousness*, but that perfect righteousness of Christ apprehended by faith: these places make it cleare, that the perfection by which we are perfectly just in this life, is out of our selves, in Christ, and the reason of it is this,

Because even the best, so long as they are in this life, have corruption of sin, remaining in them, though it bee not imputed to their condemnation, yet it dwelleth in them, Rom. 7. 20. and defileth all their thoughts, words and actions, so as they cannot aspire to perfection of righteousness in themselves, but their perfection is only in Christ, and made theirs by the application of the spirit, and the apprehension of faith.

This may serve first, to strengthen us against the erroneous and false doctrine of the Papists, who teach that a certaine limited portion (for so they speake) of justice, or righteousness, is derived out of Christ his infinite righteousness, and poured into this or that man, and so he is made perfectly just by that righteousness inherent in himselfe; a doctrine directly contrary to the truth now delivered, and such as hath no ground nor footing in the word of God, they are never able to shew it out of the word of God, that any portion of Christ his infinite justice is infused into us, and inherently made ours, that is a meer device of their owne braine.

Secondly, this doctrine makes much for the comfort of all true believers, for why? is it so that our perfection in this life is not in our selves, but out of our selves in Christ? This then may minister singular comfort to all such as truly believe in Christ; if we looke into our selves, and be able to search our selves, we shall find a world of imperfections in us: imperfect knowledge, yea, more ignorance than knowledge, imperfect faith mingled with much unbelief, weak and feeble hope, &c. yea, nothing in our selves, if wee bee not partiall in our selves, but cause of doubting, distrust, and utter despaire; but on the other side, when we remember that perfection is not to be sought for in our selves, but in Christ, and if we truly believe in Christ, that even in this life, amidst our manifold imperfections, wee have fulnesse and perfection of righteousness in him, and that in him wee are compleat and perfect, it will raise up our hearts with excellent comfort: yea, it will enlarge our hearts with this comfort further, that our perfection being in Christ, it can never be lost; we shall be as sure as Christ is in heaven, to finde perfect righteousness to our justification, and salvation; for our perfection is laid up in Christ, who is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father, and therefore nothing can take our perfection out of his hands: it is the Apostles argument, Rom. chap. 8. vers. 34. *Is Christ which is dead, yea, or rather, which is risen againe, who is also at the right hand of God,*

X

Doff. 2.

The perfection of true believers in this life is in Christ.

Reason.

Vse 1.

Strengthens against a false position of the Papists.

Vse 2.

Comfort to all true believers.

Note.

and maketh request also for us; who therefore shall condemne (saith the Apostle)? so may every true believer truly say, my perfection is laid up in Christ, who is at the right hand of his Father, who therefore shall take it from mee? not all the power of hell is able to deprive me of it, and that is an excellent comfort, and to be thought on, to the comfort of all that truly believe in Iesus Christ.

Dall. 3.
Whole Christ
God and man
is Lord over
the Angels
and farre a-
bove them.

Now from the words following, which is the head of all principality and power observe we onely this, that we are to consider Christ, even whole Christ God and man, in respect of the Angels, as a Lord over them and farre above them, the Apostle speaking of the advancement of Christ, Ephes. 1. 21. saith, *God raised him from the dead, and set him at his right hand, in the heavenly places, farre above all principality and power, and might, and domination, and every name that is named, not in this world onely, but also in that that is to come.* Hebr. 1. 4. the holy Ghost saith, *Christ is made much more excellent than the Angels, in as much as he hath obtained a more excellent name than they.*

Use 1.
We are to be
stricken with
due admiration
of the Majesty
and glory of
Christ.

And first, in this respect we are to be stricken with due admiration of the Majesty and glory of Iesus Christ: for indeed, admiration and magnifying of the Angels, hath bene the cause of giving too much unto them, even divine worship and adoration: of that point, we shall speake hereafter; but in that Christ is Lord and Governour of the Angels, it may be matter of great comfort to all that truly believe in him: and of terrour to all unbelieving persons.

Use 2.
It is matter
of comfort to
the godly, and
of terrour to
the wicked
that Christ is
Lord of the
Angels.
Comfort.
Terrours.

Of comfort to all true believers, because Christ their head is also head of the good Angels, and will be sure to send them out to minister unto them for their good, for their protection and comfort at all times, as we have it, Hebr. 1. 14. *They are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for their sake, which shall be heirs of salvation;* yea, they have a charge laid on them by Christ, to watch over thee, and to keepe thee in all thy wayes (if thou belong to him) yea to keepe and protect thee (if it be good for thee) from common dangers and calamities that be in the world, a matter of great comfort to all true believers.

On the contrary, it may strike unbelievers with terror, that Christ is the head of the good Angels, and hath them at command to execute vengeance upon them: we reade in the Scripture, that the Angell destroyed Sodome, plagued the Egyptians, and slue in one night, an hundred fourescore and five thousand in Sennacheribs host; 2 King 19. 35. how then ought men to tremble and to stand in awe of Iesus Christ the Lord of these glorious and powerfull creatures? and as the Psalmist saith, Psal. 2. 12. *Kisse the sonne lest he be angry, and so they perish and be utterly destroyed:* for certainly, if men doe it or in time make peace with this great Lord of Angels, hee will one day, as the Apostle saith, 1 Thessl. chap. 1. ver. 7. *show himselfe from heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, rendering vengeance unto them that doe not know God, and obey not his Gospel,* let this be thought on by all hard hearted and unrepentant sinners.

Ver. 11. *In whom also ye are circumcised with circumcision made without hands, by putting off the fumesfull body of the flesh, through the circumcision of Christ.*

THis verse is an anticipation or prevention of a secret objection. For the Colossians might say: You tell us that we are compleat in Christ, but there be some teachers that say, wee Gentiles wanting circumcision are unclean; and therefore not perfect in Christ; this the Apostle meetes withall in this verse, and saith, that in Christ they also were circumcised; and in this verse the Apostle begins to reason against the third meane of corruption used by seducers, spoken of in the eighth verse, namely, the rudiments of the world, the

the legall doctrine touching circumcision, sacrifices, and ceremonies among the Jewes: and he begins in particular to deale against circumcision, shewing that the beleeving Colossians needed not to be outwardly circumcised in the flesh, as a complement or meane to adde any thing to their perfection in Christ; his reason is this.

You are by the power of Christ inwardly circumcised, therefore you need not outward circumcision in the flesh.

That is the summe and substance of this verse, and so stands the Apostles reason against outward circumcision.

Now before I come to speake more particularly of this verse, a doubt must be removed. Some may take exception against the Apostles argument, as insufficient, and say, it is not to the purpose and question in hand, and not continuing in the termes of the question.

For the question betweene the Apostle and false teachers was, whether circumcision in the flesh was necessary or no: the Apostle saith no, it is not necessary; his reason is, because they were inwardly circumcised. Now may some say, this is not to the purpose, this proves not outward circumcision to be therefore needless, because they were inwardly circumcised: If this be a sufficient argument against outward circumcision; then this also is a good argument against outward baptism, that such as are inwardly washed by the holy Ghost, need not outward baptism; but we see that to be contrary by the practice of Peter, who commanded that Cornelius his family, and others met together, being inwardly baptised by the holy Ghost, should be also baptised with water in the name of the Lord Iesus; therefore this seems to be no sound and sufficient argument used by the Apostle.

Yee are inwardly circumcised, and therefore need not outward circumcision.

For the removeall of this doubt, we must consider a difference and distinction of times, namely, of the time under the old Testament, and the time under the new Testament: of the time before the coming of Christ in the flesh, and the time after. In the time of the old Testament, such an argument as the Apostle useth, had beene weak and insufficient, because then circumcision was in force, both as a signe of the *Messias* to come, and a seale of righteousness and regeneration: but in the time of the new Testament, the *Messias* being come, the Apostles argument is strong and sufficient, because that circumcision (with the whole regiment of *Moses*) is abolished, and the instance of baptism is not to the purpose, because there is now this difference betweene outward circumcision, and outward baptism, the one is abolished and removed by the coming of Christ, and the other standeth in force, by the institution and commandment of Iesus Christ; therefore these two reasons are not alike. Yee are inwardly circumcised, and therefore neede not outward circumcision; that is a good argument: and yee are inwardly baptised, and therefore need not outward baptism, that is insufficient: and to make some short use of this before wee passe from it: is it so that the reason of the Apostle had beene naught, if circumcision had beene in force as it was in time of the old Testament? then let us thinke upon it in the like case, that it is no good argument, and sufficient plea for thee, whosoever thou art, to say, I have the effect of this or that Sacrament inwardly wrought in mee, and the inward fruit of it, therefore I need not use the outward Sacrament, but at my pleasure, when I will my selfe; it may bee this is the conceit of such as seldome come to the Table of the Lord; haply once or twice in a yeare, it may bee they thinke thus, I have that in mee which the Sacrament can seale up unto mee, namely, true faith in the blood of Christ, what need I then often to come to the Lords Table: oh remember whosoever thou art (if this bee the thought of thine heart) this is a deceiving thought,

this

Obiect.

Answer.

Use of this answer to the objection.

this is not sufficient to excuse thy wilfull withdrawing of thy selfe from the Sacrament; this will not cleere thee from being found guilty of great contempt of the order that Iesus Christ hath left his Church: that even such as have the greatest measure of faith should often come, to testifie and seale up the same, by receiving the outward Sacrament, and if thou bee a contemner of Christ his order, thou art then one of those himselfe speaks of, Luk 19. 14. who will not have him to raigne over thee, and that punishment threatned, verse 27. shall one day light on thee, *Those mine enemies which would not that I should raigne over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me*, the Lord will cut thee off, and give thee thy portion with hypocrites.

Come we now to speake of this verse more particularly, we may observe in it these things laid before us.

First, that in Christ the beleevving Colossians were circumcised, *In whom also ye are circumcised*,

Secondly, the manner of their circumcision, with circumcision made without hands:

Thirdly, what it was, namely, a putting off the sinfull body of the flesh.

And lastly, by what meanes it was wrought, and how they were in Christ circumcised, namely, through his circumcision; through the circumcision of Christ: of these in order. *In whom also ye are circumcised with circumcision made without hands*: for the right conceiving of these words, wee must know that circumcision among the Iewes was a cutting off of the foreskinne of the flesh, as appeares in the institution of it, Genes. 17. 10. 11. and that cutting off the foreskinne was among them a Sacrament; answerable to our Sacrament of Baptisme, a signe of Gods covenant of grace, as the Lord there saith, *and such of righteousness*, as the Apostle saith, Rom. 4. 11. Now as in our Sacrament of Baptisme, there is the outward washing of water, and the inward washing of the spirit in them that are truly baptized: so was there among the Iewes an outward circumcision in the flesh, a cutting off the foreskinne of the flesh, and an inward circumcision of the heart, a cutting off the foreskinne of the heart by the Spirit of God: thus then wee are to understand the Apostle when he saith, *In whom also ye are circumcised with circumcision made without hands*, as if hee had thus spoken: In Christ also yee beleevving Colossians have the foreskin cut off as well as the Iewes, I meane the inward foreskinne of your hearts, which is not cut off by the hand of man, but by the finger of God, even by the spirit of God.

Now first in that the Apostle saith, the beleevving Colossians who were not outwardly circumcised, were notwithstanding inwardly circumcised, and that they in Christ had the effect of circumcision, without the outward signe of circumcision.

Hence wee may gather this conclusion, That the grace of God is not tied to the outward signe, and the outward Sacrament; grace signified by circumcision may be had without circumcision in the flesh, as appeares plainly by these words of the Apostle: therefore grace is not ryed to the outward signe or Sacrament.

But to prevent an objection in the beginning. Some may say indeed, grace signified by circumcision, may now bee had without circumcision, because the outward signe is not now in force: but in time of the old Testament it could not bee had without circumcision: for the Lord saith, Genes. chap. 17. vers. 14. *The uncircumcised manchild in whose flesh the foreskinne is not circumcised, and the person shall be cut off from his people, &c.* and consequently grace cannot now be had without the outward signes of grace: therefore grace is tied to the Sacrament.

To this I answer, first, that even then when circumcision was in force, the grace of God was not ryed to it; for the Lords owne appointment was, that the childe

Interpre-
tation

Doctrine 1.
Gods grace is
not ryed to the
outward signe
of the Sacra-
ment.

Obiect.

Answer.

childe should not be circumcised till the eighth day, Genes. 17. 11. which hee would not have done, if grace had beene tied to circumcision: and forty yeeres together was circumcision omitted in the wilderness, Joshua 5. 6, 7. and yet we are not to say, whoever among them died in that time wanted grace to salvation, farre be it from us.

Againe, for the place alledged: I answer, that place is to be understood of such as were of yeeres and discretion, and not of infants: for it is not said, the uncircumcised person being an infant, but indefinitely, the uncircumcised: and there is reason so to understand it from the text it selfe, for the Lord saith in the last words of the verse, *because he hath broken my covenant*: now to breake Gods covenant is not incident to infants, but to men of yeeres. Wee see then grace to salvation, even in the time of the old Testament, when circumcision was in force, might be had without that outward signe, if there were no wilfull neglect or contempt of it: and consequently, grace is not tied, either then or now to the outward signe or Sacrament of grace: the words of David after the death of the childe that died before the eighth day, 2 Sam. 12. 23. are to be considered, *I shall goe to it*, saith David: without question, hee meant not that the childe was in hell, or in any *Limbus infantum*, as the Papists dreame; but he comforted himselfe by conceived hope that it was with the Lord, and thither himselfe should goe. Remember againe, the thiefe on the crosse that repented and was converted, Christ saith to him, Luk. 23. 43. *this day shalt thou be with mee in Paradise*, yet he wanted the outward sacrament of baptism.

This I deliver to this purpose, even to strengthen us against feare, and doubting of the salvation of children taken away before they can come to baptism. There is sometimes a scruple and doubt sticking in the minds of some, touching children, that die without the outward sacrament of baptism: wee must learne to cast out that scruple, and know, that God is not worke to us under the Gospell, than he was to them under the Law; nor lesse able to save the seede of the faithfull, now without baptism, than hee was then without circumcision; his grace was not then free, and now bound, then great, and now little, then strong, and now weaker: we are not so to imagine: it were a wrong, yea, a blasphemy against the infinite mercy of our gracious God, who is thy God, and the God of thy seede, not adding any condition of baptism, if it cannot be had, as it ought.

Oh, but there is one speech of Christ himselfe, that haply strikes deepe, and it is objected by the Papists, Ioh. 3. 5. to prove an absolute necessity of outward baptism, our Saviour saith there, *except a man be borne of water and of the spirit, hee cannot enter into the Kingdoms of God*: behold (say they) a plaine prooffe that outward baptism is absolutely necessary to salvation.

I answer, first it can never be proved by sound reason, that, that place is to be understood of infants, but rather of men of yeeres: for if wee marke it, Nicodemus his question (verse 4.) was this, *How can a man that is old be borne?* can hee enter into his mothers wombe againe, and be borne? our Saviour answereth, (holding (no doubt) to the termes of that question) *Verily, verily, except a man growne in yeeres, in whom there is either wilfull neglect, or contempt of baptism, be borne of water and of the spirit, hee cannot enter into the Kingdoms of God*. And againe, it is no more necessary, that by water in this place, wee should understand materiall water, than by the word fire, Math. 3. 11. wee should understand materiall fire: but rather, by water we are to understand the office and worke of the holy Ghost (namely) spirituall washing, as if our Saviour had said, *except a man be borne of the spirituall washing of the holy Ghost, hee cannot enter into the Kingdoms of God*: and this is agreeable to that which followeth, vers. 6. *that which is borne of the spirit is spirit*, and vers. 8. *so is every one that is borne of the spirit*; where we finde no mention of water. It remaines then, notwithstanding

V/c.

Comfort against feare & doubting, of the salvation of children dying before they be baptized.

Object.

Answ.

ding this speech of Christ, that outward baptism is not of absolute necessity to salvation: therefore let us not feare the salvation of infants departed this life, in regard of the want of outward baptism; but looke we with comfort to the covenant God hath made with the faithfull, that he will be their God, and the God of their seed.

We are further to marke that the Apostle sets out the inward circumcision of the Colossians, in these termes, *circumcision made without bands*. Hence wee may take up this conclusion:

That the inward circumcision of the heart, the cutting of the defiled foreskin of the heart, and taking away the corruption of it, is not a worke of the hand of man, but it is a worke of the finger of God, and only wrought by the powerfull hand of God. Hence it is that *Moses* saith, Deut. 30. 6. *The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seeds, that thou maist love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soule, that thou maist live.* The reason of this is: Because inward circumcision of the heart, the inward purging of the heart is a new creation, as *David* prayed, Psal. 51. 10. *Create in me a cleane heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me*: therefore proper onely to the hand of God. Now, lest we stumble and bee not able to keepe our selves from falling in respect of precepts given in Scripture, to circumcise our owne hearts, to change them and the like, *Jerem. 4. 4. be circumcised to the Lord*: wee must know that all such precepts given in Scripture to men since the fall of *Adam*, and in his corrupt state, doe not signifie and imply any power in man to performe them, but teach us our duty, that we are to seeke for helpe, where it is to be had, even at the hands of God: and let that be the first use of this point.

That seeing circumcision of the heart, is a worke onely of the hand of God, let us then ever seek and sue to him that he would vouchsafe to put his hand to our bosomes, and plucke off the foreskin of our hearts, and take away the corruption of them.

And againe, if the Lord have in any measure circumcised our hearts, let us give him the whole praise and glory of that worke, looke not too much on the outward instrument; doe not too much gaze upon the excellency of the work of any that hath bene a meane of thy conversion, lest so thou give part of the glory to the instrument; but ever have thine eye upon the mighty power of the Lord, whose onely worke it hath bene. Remember that *Paul* or *Apollas* were but the ministers of God, by whom thou hast bene brought to beleefe, *1 Cor. 3. 5. blese God for them, but give him alone all the praise, and all the glory of that great worke.*

Now come wee to the words following: *By putting off the fennell body of the flesh through the circumcision of Christ*. Wherein the Apostle sets downe what is the inward circumcision, namely, a putting off the fennell body of the flesh. (By putting off) these words are often used by the Apostle in the like manner that is here handled, as chap. 2. 9. *seeing ye have put off the old man with his works*: *Ephes. 4. 22. that ye wast off concerning the conversation in time past, the old man which is corrupt through the deceitfull lusts*: and they are metaphoricall, borrowed and taken from uncloathing of the body, or the stripping off of the apparel, and doe signifie the manner of taking away, and abolishing of the inward corruption of the heart, that it is after the manner of uncloathing the body, or rather indeed of putting off the skinde of the body, the heart and inward powers of the soule being enwrapped and encompassed with corruption as with a filthy garment or leprous skine. (*Fennell body*) The word *body* doth not here signifie any corporall substance, consisting of flesh, blood and bones, but is also a word used by way of similitude, to signifie the masse lump of corruption, and that the lump of corruption is expressed by this word (*body*) to signify the greatest and extension of it, that it is as a body having all dimensions, height

Doct. 2.
The inward circumcision of the heart is not a worke of mans hand, but of the powerfull hand of God.

Reason.
Note.

Use. 1.
We are to seek and sue to the Lord that hee would circumcise our hearts.

Use. 2.
The whole praise & glory of our conversion must be given to the Lord.

Interpretation.

height, length, breadth, and thickness, and as having all the parts of a foule monstrous and deformed body, in which are found all finnes bound up as it were in one body, which breake out as any occasion is offered: hence it is that the Apostle calls divers foule finnes breaking out of this body, our members, chap. 3. 5. by sinfull body, then understand wee, the sinfull masse or lump of corruption: *of the flesh*, by the word *flesh*, wee are to understand the corruption of nature, even of the whole nature of man, of all the powers and abilities both of soule and body; for it is frequent and usuall in Scripture to put the word *flesh*, for the corruption of nature; and not onely to signifie the corruption of the inferiour parts of the soule; as the affection, appetite, senses; but also of the superiour, even of the reasonable soule, and of the powers thereof, the minde, will, memory and conscience, Rom. 8. 7. the wisdom of the flesh, that is, the wisdom of the minde, for that is the seate of wisdom, in the naturall and corrupt state of it, is enmity against God; and the reason why the corruption of the whole nature of man is called flesh, is this, because it comes by propagation, by naturall and carnall generation; and that that is borne of the flesh is flesh, Ioh. 3. 6. so then the full sense and meaning of the Apostle in these words, by putting off the sinfull body of the flesh, is this: By taking away and stripping off, as it were a leprous filthy garment or skinned, the sinfull masse, lump and body of the naturall corruption of the whole man, even of all the powers and abilities of soule and body.

Here first observe we, that the Apostle sets out the inward circumcision of the heart in these termes, that it is a putting off, an unclothing or a stripping off the filthy leprous garment of corruption: hence we are taught:

That the Spirit of God inwardly circumcising and regenerating the heart, doth not take away the substance of the heart, but the corruption of it: regeneration is not an abolishing or taking away of any faculty of the soule; as understanding, memory, will, conscience, or any naturall affection of the soule, but only a stripping off the filthinesse and corruption of them: for why? naturall corruption is not a substantiall thing (as some have thought) nor a corruption of the substance of the soule, for then could not the soule be immortall, if the substance of it were corrupted, nor Christ have taken mans nature without finne; but it is a corruption cleaving and clinging to the faculties of the soule, and to the affections of the heart, and such as may be removed by the powerfull worke of Gods Spirit: and hence it is said to be an evill that doth compasse us about, Hebr. 12. 1. *Cast away every thing that presseth downe, and the sinne that hangeth so fast on*, or that doth so easily compasse us about, so the originall word signifieth; therefore regeneration is not an abolishing of any faculty of the soule, but a putting off of that filthinesse; and that corruption that doth enwrap and compasse about every faculty of it. This I note in a word, it may be unto us one ground of triall, whether wee be truly regenerate or no; it may serve as one meanes whereby wee may know it: for marke, regeneration is not a taking away of any faculty of the soule, or of any affection of the heart, but of the corruption of it: hereby then examine thy selfe, no doubt thou art, or maist be acquainted with the disposition of thine owne heart, (I say not with the depth, and all the devices of it) *the heart of man is deceitfull and wicked above all things, who can know it?* Ierem. 17. 9. onely the searcher of the heart, the Lord hee knowes it; but with a little observation, thou maist be acquainted with the naturall inclination, and disposition of thine heart, in regard of the predominant and chiefe ruling affection of it, whether it be naturally given most of all to feare, to love, to joy, to sorrow, to anger, or the like; well then, knowing the chiefe ruling affection of thine owne heart, see whether that affection still remaine in thee in the force and strength of it without the corruption of it; if it doe, then thou art truly regenerate; but if it doe not, thou dost but flatter and deceive

Doctr. 3.

Regeneration doth not abolish any faculty of the soule or any naturall affection of it, but only taketh away the corruption of them.

Use.

Triall of the soundnesse and truth of our regeneration.

deceive thy selfe: For example; if thou beest once given to much ioy, and much reioycing, thou art one of a merry and cheerefull disposition: see whether thy ioy and thy reioycing be still as great and strong as ever it was, not in sinne, and in outward carnall things, for this is the sinfulness of it; but in God, and in good things: if thou finde that thou canst now reioyce, not in filthy carnall pleasure, in drunkenesse, or good fellowship, as it is called, nor so much reioyce in the outward blessings of this life, but that thou canst as heartily reioyce as ever thou couldest; yea, thou canst more heartily reioyce in the love and mercy of God in Iesus Christ, in his service, and obedience to his will, for his love and goodnesse, than in any other thing: that is a sure marke of a good and regenerate heart, and that the Spirit of God hath wrought powerfully in thee, and stripped off the sinfulness and corruption of thy ioy and cheerefulness in thee by nature: So if thou be one of a hot, hasty, and cholerike nature; if thou finde that naturall anger of thine stripped off, the fulness of it, namely, the rashnesse, the easynesse to be provoked upon every trifling occasion, the excesse in the measure, making thee to forget duty both to God and man, and the expressing of it, for meere private causes concerning thine owne person, and not the cause of God; (for these are the filthy rags wherewith thy naturall anger is clothed) if thou finde not that affection it selfe abolished, but these things taken from it, and that thine anger is not stirred up, upon waighy and manifest offence to God, conceived with deliberation, kindled through desire to maintaine Gods glory, love of iustice and vertue, and directed against sinne, and not the person of the sinner, but with love to his person, and sorrow for the sinne, and with moderation, not making thee unfit for duties to God and man: then is that affection wrought upon by the Spirit of God, then is thine anger a holy, iust, and sanctified anger: and thus maist thou try thy selfe in other affections, and remember it, that regeneration is not a taking away of any affection of the heart, but a stripping off the corruption of it.

Doct. 4.

True regeneration is a removal of corruption from all the powers and faculties of the soule.

Reason.

Wee are in the next place to marke that the Apostle saith, inward circumcision is a putting off, or taking away of the body of the flesh, not some part, but of the whole body of it.

Hence we may take up this conclusion: That true regeneration is entire, it is an abolishing of the whole masse and lumpe of naturall corruption, that is, of naturall corruption in all the powers and faculties of the soule, not a removing of corruption from the minde alone, or will alone, but from all and every faculty of the soule: hence it is in other termes expressed, to be a putting off the old man; giving us to understand, that it is an entire worke, even as the putting out of a perfect man, with all the parts and members of a perfect man: for indeed, where the Spirit of God doth worke upon any man to the purging and taking away of his naturall corruption, hee doth worke upon all the powers of his soule, grace is never effectually truly to purge one faculty of the soule, and not another: if naturall blindness, ignorance, and dullnesse of minde be taken away by sanctifying grace, the will and affections are also wrought upon in like proportion: and hence is regeneration called a new creation, and a new birth, and therefore it is entire, and of the whole man. It were easie to enlarge the prooffe of this; but for the use of it.

Use.

None ought to thinke himselfe truly regenerate unless he finde himselfe throughout wrought upon by the Spirit of God.

Is it so, that where the Spirit of God doth effectually worke regeneration, he puts off the whole body of corruption? let no man then deceive himselfe, let no man thinke he is truly regenerate, because (haply) hee is enlightened, and hath a generall footing knowledge of the mysteries of the Gospell, and yet notwithstanding is carried away with some inordinate affection, or some corrupt lust, to pride, to covetousnesse, to drunkennesse, to sensuall pleasure, to some one grosse sinne or other: if this be true regeneration, then Herod and Judas were truly regenerate. Herod knew much, and did many good things, yet was hee a meere carnall

carnall man, possessed with inordinate love of his brothers wife. *Indas* a Disciple of Christ, and no question Christ taught him, and hee taught others many good things, yet was he a carnall man, carried away with the inordinate lust of covetousnesse; and therefore deceive not thy selfe, thinke not that the Spirit of God hath wrought on thee to thy regeneration, unlesse thou finde that hee hath put off the whole body of thy corruption, and have crucified the flesh, with all the inordinate affections and lusts of it; and withall remember, that except thou be truly regenerate, thou hast no part nor portion in Gods Kingdome, that is Christ his owne speech, Joh. 3. 5.

Now here a question may be moved, namely this :

How farre forth the whole body of corruption is put off and taken away in them that are truly regenerate?

To this I answer, that the body of corruption is put away onely in part in this life. Though the Spirit of God doe worke upon all the powers of the soule, and put off the body of corruption in such as are regenerate, yet not wholly and perfectly for the time of this life: therefore the Apostle here speaks in the present time, and saith, Inward circumcision is a putting off of the filthy body of the flesh, signifying a continuall act, never perfected in this life, the corruption of nature remains till death, in the most regenerate, though not imputed unto them: the Apostle affirms it of himselfe, Rom. chap. 7, and he calls it sinne: in many verses of that Chapter, which the Papists deny: I will not stand to dispute the question, but I say, it remains in the most regenerate not imputed unto them, and wounded, so as the regenerate doe not serve it, Rom. chap. 6. verse 6, nor subject themselves to the tyranny of it, to obey it in the lusts thereof, as the Apostle teacheth; also by implication, Rom. chap. 6. vers. 12. *Let not sinne reigne therefore in your mortall bodies that you should obey it in the lusts thereof;* and herein is a maine difference betweene the regenerate and unregenerate. In the unregenerate, the Spirit of God doth onely reſtraine and hold backe corruption, or for a time turne the affections of their hearts cleane another way, for the good of his children, as hee did the hearts of the Egyptians, Exod. chap. 12. vers. 36, the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and the heart of *Saul* towards *David* for a time, 1 Sam. chap. 24. vers. 17. but shortly after his hatred brake out againe, and hee purposed to kill him. And thus doth the Spirit of God, either reſtraine, or turne the affections of the heart another way in the unregenerate onely for a time, but afterwards it breakes out and shewes it selfe againe: but in the regenerate, the Spirit of God doth take away the power of naturall corruption, so as at no time it beares sway in them, but they hate it, and labour, and groane for deliverance from it; and though sometime it gives them a blow and a wound, yet is it with much reluctance and striving against it, as the Apostle saith of himselfe, Rom. 7. 15. and after that, they recover themselves by speedy repentance.

Now further, in that the Apostle doth expresse the corruption of nature under this word *body*, signifying that it is as a body, having (as it were) all dimensions of a body.

Hence we are taught, that the corruption of nature is exceeding great, it is no light superficiall thing, no shadow, but as it were a masse and substantiall body; it is not as some have taught, onely a privation, an absence or want of that holinesse and righteounesse that ought to be in us, but it is more, even a positive thing, such a thing as hath a reall being, it is both a guiltinesse in respect of *Adams* sinne, for in *Adam* all sinned, Rom. chap. 5. vers. 12. and it is an inclination or pronenesse of all the faculties of the soule, to that which is evill, and against the Law of God; the understanding is not onely blind, but carried to error and vaine imaginations, the will is not onely nilling, or not willing that which is good, but averſe and repugnant, and striving against it, and wil-

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Quest

Answer.

Dof. 5.

The corruption of nature is as it were a masse & substantiall body, and it hath a reall being, and is exceeding great.

ling onely that which is evill continually : it is said, Genes. chap. 6. vers. 5. *The Lord saw that the wickednesse of man was great in the earth, and why? all the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart were only evill continually,* and that the greatnesse of the corruption of nature may yet further appeare, consider we the diffusion and spreading of it, it is as a leprosie spread over all the powers of the soule, there is not one free spot in the soule, but all and every one is defiled with it. Hence it is called the old man; giving us to understand, that the naturall man is nothing, but as a man made of corruption, it is even as the man himselfe: and doe not naturall and carnall men demonstrate and prove this? Abridge them of their lusts, and they thinke they are no men, they had rather die than be abridged of them; and hence it is also called the law of the members, Rom. 7. 23. because all the powers of the soule, and parts of the body are subject to it as to a Law.

Againe, consider wee the comprehension of it, it containes all finnes in it as a root, or as an Ocean Sea, sending out into every channell and vaine of the body, streames and flouds of sinne; so as one saith well, If all the heresies that be, were ceased in the world, yet if God leave a man to himselfe, he hath in himselfe sufficient matter and spawne to breed and revive all kinde of errors and sinne: the Apostle, Gal. 5. 19. 20. having reckoned up many workes of the flesh, is forced to conclude and say, verse. 21. *and such like,* as being not able to thinke of all the finnes that doe as fire sparkle out of that furnace.

Last of all, the greatnesse of the corruption of nature may plainly appeare, in that it takes occasion by the commandment of God, to breake out, and to shew it selfe as the Apostle saith, Rome. 7. 8. *sinne* (meaning the corruption of nature) *tooke occasion by the commandment, and wrought in me all manner of concupiscence;* and againe, verse 13. *sinne, that it might appeare sinne,* that is, exceeding great, *wrought death in me by that which is good, that sinne might be out of measure full by the commandment:* it is herein like the gangrene or elephantiasis, the leprosie, it is made worse by that which should be a meanes to cure it, it breakes out upon the commandment of God. If then we duly consider the spreading, the comprehension, and swelling of our naturall corruption, it breaking out upon the commandment of God, which is given as a remedy against it, we must needs confesse it to be exceeding great.

Use.
We are not to thinke it a small matter to be in our naturall condition, as many foolishly doe.

Now then this being so, that our naturall corruption is so exceeding great, it being not onely a want of that holinesse that ought to be in us, but a pronenesse to all evill spread over all the powers of the soule, containing the seeds of all finnes, and breaking out upon the commandment of God: let no man thinke it a small matter to be a naturall man, and a light and trifling thing to be in his naturall condition. Some there be who please themselves, and hold themselves in very good case; because they are no drunkards, no whoremongers, or the like, they cannot justly be charged with any grosse offence: yea, some sticke not to bolt out this, or the like foolish speech, that Preachers should lay before men onely their open grosse finnes, and deale onely against drunkennesse, whoredome, and such like finnes: a speech tasting of a filthy vessell whence it comes; yea, sent out (be it spoken with reverence) from a very dunghill of filthinesse and corruption. Thou that thus speakest, whosoever thou art, thou hast yet a rotten and a filthy stinking heart; this argues thou dost not know and conceive the corruption of thine owne nature, nor the staitie and danger of it: thou art yet in bondage to thine owne corruption, and a vassall and slave to the Divell, therefore thinke upon it; and sorely such as thinke they are in a good case, onely because they are no drunkards, no whoremongers, or the like; they see not the inward sinne of their hearts, and their corruption of nature, for they may be so by restraining grace, and yet lye wallowing in the puddle of their owne filthinesse; and for a man to thinke himselfe in a good case, onely because he is free from the act of some palpable finnes; it is all one as if a Traitor to his

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Prince, should thinke himselfe free from the danger of Law and execution, because he cannot justly be charged with petty pilfering or stealing; for it is not only actuall transgression of Gods Law, but even our naturall corruption, and that chiefly it being the mother sinne, and the seed of all other finnes, that doth sever us from Gods favour, and make us stand subject to Gods curse and everlasting perdition. Let us then labour to see the greatnesse of our naturall guilt and corruption, and to see our selves under Gods wrath in regard of it, and seeing it, bewaile and lament for it above all things; yea, whensoever wee make confession to God of any knowne actuall sinne, wee are then to be brought to the sight of that sinne, even to see with sorrow the root of it, and all our other finnes, and to cry out with *Paul*, Rom. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death.* And with *David*, Psalm. 51. 5. *Behold, I was borne in iniquity, and in sinne hath my mother conceived mee.* For confession of some knowne sinne may be forced out from selfe-love, feare of shame, punishment, or such like; and unlesse by that sinne we be brought downe to the root of all our finnes, and to have a sense and sorrow for that also, wee shall never finde ease or reliefe by Christ; *hee came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance*, Math. 9. 13. and not every sinner, but that sinner that condemnes sinne in himselfe, and especially the mother sinne, and is weary and laden, and groanes under the burthen of it, Matth. 11. 28.

In that the Apostle calls the corruption of the whole nature of man, and of all the powers of the soule. [*Flesh*] hee would have us to know that the corruption of nature comes by propagation, it comes not (as *Pelagius* and his followers taught) by imitation: children have not a want of holinesse that ought to be in them, and a pronenesse to sinne in all the powers of their senses by imitation, but it is conveyed unto them from their parents by naturall generation, as we are plainly taught, Genes. chap. 5. vers. 3. It is there said, that *Adam* after his fall begat *Seth* in his owne likenesse, that is, corrupted like himselfe. For as *Iob* speaks, chap. 14. vers. 1. *Who can bring a cleane thing out of filthinesse?* it is not possible. Hence wee are said to be children of wrath by nature, or nativity, even so borne, Ephes. chap. 2. vers. 3. And most plainly speaks *David* to this purpose, Psalm. chap. 51. vers. 5. *I was borne in iniquity, and in sinne hath my mother conceived me:* and if we desire further evidence and prooffe of this, consider we but this one thing, that many time some particular and inward evill quality of the parents is found in the child in his infancy, before he can learne it by imitation; and therefore it is conveyed and transmitted from the parent to the childe by generation: I say many times, not alwaies; for it pleaseth God sometimes of his goodnesse to stay the course of a particular evill quality and disposition, that it passe not from the parent to the childe; as hee did in the birth of *Hezekiah*, the sonne of a most wicked father, King *Ahaz*; and of *Iosab*, sonne of wicked *Ammon*: but originall corruption common to the stocke, and common to mankind, is ever conveyed from the parents to the child by propagation, and it is perpetuall by naturall generation.

And this must teach us to take heed of pride and swelling in regard of birth and parentage; men commonly looke at the worthinesse of their parents, and boast much of the dignity and eminency of their ancestors, in respect of their blood, riches, honour, and such like; but if they looke as they ought, they shall finde matter enough to humble them; they shall finde that their father was an *Amorite*, &c. as the Prophet speaks, Ezech. 16. 3. and that they are in the common condition of all men, polluted in their blood; and though they receive from their parents outward glory and honour, yet withall they receive such an hereditary common corruption and disease; yea, it may be, together with that, such particular infection, as makes them odious in the sight of God; and if the course of it be not stayed, it will poison their bodies and soules more

Note.

Dott. 6.
The corruption of nature comes by propagation.

Note.

Vse 1.
Wee must take heed of pride and swelling in respect of parentage.

Vse. 2.

Parents must labour to estate their children in some thing that may be for the good of their soules.

Quest.

Answ.

and more, till at length both body and soule (like a rotten poysoned thing) drop downe into hell.

Againe, is it so that naturall corruption comes by propagation? then let this stirre up all parents to labour to estate and intitle their children in some thing, that may be for the good of their soules, that their children descending of them, may be intituled to some thing that may be for their good.

How is this to be done may some say?

Let them labour to bring themselves within the covenant of grace, and to become true believing members of Christ, and then though they cannot derive their faith and holinesse unto them, because they beget them, not as good men and believers, but as men simply, by the power and strength of nature: yet by vertue of the covenant, God will be good and gracious to their children. Genes. chap. 26. Wee reade many blessings promised to *Isaac*, and why? Verse 5. because *Abraham* his father obeyed the voice of the Lord, and kept his Ordinances and Commandements, his Statutes and Lawes. Teaching plainly, that the holinesse of parents seales up the Lords favour, not onely to themselves, but to their children also: this cannot raking and scraping together of wealth doe; men use to say, happy is the childe whose father goeth to the Divell, a wicked saying; it is rather a comfort to children, when they can remember their parents, are, or have beene godly, and in the favour of God; for he loving the stocke, will not disregard the branches; they may say as *Jacob* said, Genes. chap. 32. vers. 9. *Thou hast beene, or art, the God of my father*, good and gracious to him, shew then mercy to mee his seede, according to thy sweet promise. Yea, God is good even to wicked children of good parents. Genes. chap. 36. vers. 7. *Esau* had riches and outward good things, 1 King. chap. 11. vers. 2. When the Lord rent the Kingdome from *Salomon* for his sinne, yet one Tribe was left for *Dauids* sake. A notable inducement to make parents to become godly: and if wee desire that God should be good to our children after us: let us labour to bring our selves within the covenant, and wee shall finde that, an effectuall meanes to move God to mercy towards our children for many generations.

Come wee to the last words [*through the circumcision of Christ.*] In these words is expresse the meanes how the believing Colossians were in Christ circumcised, namely, through, or by the circumcision of Christ. In this place wee are not to understand the passive circumcision, that, whereby Christ himselfe was circumcised; but the active, that, whereby we in him are circumcised and regenerated by his Spirit: and we may note and observe a difference between Justification and Regeneration, or Sanctification; the Apostle speaking of Justification in the verse before, saith, We have perfection of righteousness in Christ, in him wee are compleate, not adding any thing further, that that perfection is wrought in us by Christ: but here speaking of Regeneration and Sanctification, hee saith that in Christ also wee are regenerate, and hee expounds his owne meaning, how? namely, through the circumcision of Christ, through the working of his Spirit in us; whence we see a manifest and plaine difference between Justification and Sanctification. The Papists confound these two, in teaching Justification by holinesse inherent: and I note this, to teach us to take heed of so confounding of them; and know wee that Justification is by righteousness inherent in Christ, apprehended by faith, and Regeneration and Sanctification is wrought in us by the Spirit of Christ in this life, but in part, and shall be made perfect in the life to come.

Doctr. 7.

There is a manifest difference between Justification and Sanctification.

Vse.

Wee must take heed wee confound them not.

Vers. 12.

Verf. 12. *In that ye are buried with him through Baptisme, in whom ye are also raised up together through the Faith of the operation of God which raised him from the dead.*

IN this verse the Apostle meets with a secret exception that might be made against his speech in the former verse, on this manner; some might say, though outward circumcision (the cutting away of the foreskinne of the flesh) be not now needfull for the beleiving Colossians (that being proper to the time of the old Testament) yet they have need of an outward signe and Sacrament, signifying and sealing up unto them, their inward and spirituall circumcision: this exception the Apostle prevents in this verse, shewing that the Colossians had an outward signe and seale of their inward circumcision, namely, Baptisme, which (by Christ his institution) succeeded circumcision: and that instead of being circumcised, they were baptized, and so had the outward signe with the thing signified:

Now the Apostle doth not rest in expressing the outward signe of Baptisme, but by way of further explication and declaration of the inward circumcision and abolishing of the corruption of the beleiving Colossians, he sets it out (together with the inward things signified) by Baptisme, and whereof through Baptisme they were made partakers as,

First, that through Baptisme, was signified and sealed up unto them, and they made partakers of the buriall of, Christ. *In that ye are buried with him through Baptisme.*

Secondly, that through Baptisme was signified and sealed up unto them, and they made partakers of Christ his resurrection, in these words: *In whom ye are also raised up together.*

And then followeth the inward meanes by which their outward Baptisme was effectually, to make them partakers of Christ his buriall, and resurrection namely, faith, *through the faith.*

Which faith is further described by the efficient cause of it, that is the cause working faith in the heart, namely, the power of God, through the faith of the operation of God.

And that power and operation of God is further specified, to bee the same that raised up Christ from the dead, in the last words, *which raised him up from the dead.*

Come we to the particular examination of the words as they are laid downe by the Apostle: and first of these words [*In that ye are buried with him through Baptisme.*] For the understanding of these words, two questions are to bee answered.

First, what it is to be buried with Christ.

Secondly, how through Baptisme we are buried with him.

For the first; to be buried with Christ, is, to have fellowship and communion with Christ in his buriall, to partake with Christ, both in the merit of his buriall, whereby he hath changed the nature of the grave, and taken away the horror of it, and turned it from an house of perdition, to a place of sweet repose; and to partake with Christ in the power of his buriall, to burie sinne and naturall corruption in vs.

For the second question I answer, that we are buried with Christ through Baptisme two waies.

First, in signe and Sacrament only, for the dipping of the party baptized in the water, and abiding vnder the water for a time, doth represent and seale vnto vs the buriall of Christ, and his abiding in the grave; and of this all are partakers Sacramentally.

Interpretation.

Quest. 2.

Answer to the 1.

Answer

to the 2.

Secondly, we are buried with Christ through Baptisme, not onely in signe and Sacrament, but indeed, and truth, when by the working of his spirit we are baptized into Christ, and really ingrafted into him: for being really and truly made one with Christ, we are made partakers of the merit and power of his death, buriall, and resurrection, and all his benefits, as the Apostle plainly teacheth, Rom. 6. 3. 4. 5. 6. *Know ye not that all we which have beene baptized into Jesus Christ, have beene baptized into his death? Wee are buried then with him by Baptisme into his death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also should walke in newnesse of life. For if we be grafted with him to the similitude of his death, even so shall we be to the similitude of his resurrection, knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sinne might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sinne, &c.* where he shewes that such as are baptized not onely in signe and Sacrament, but truly baptized into Christ, are baptized into his death, buriall, and resurrection, and so are partakers of the merit and power of his death, buriall, and resurrection. By the answer to these two questions, wee may come to conceive the meaning of the Apostle in these words to bee this: as if hee had said, in that yee through Baptisme being truly ingrafted into Christ, and made one with him, are partakers of the merit and power of his death and buriall, (for his buriall presupposeth his death, and the Apostle is so to be understood) to kill and burie sinne and naturall corruption in you. Now these words being thus understood, the words following are after the same manner to bee expounded; onely reading for (in whom) in which, with reference to Baptisme, as the originall will beare it, and it is more agreeable to the context. In which Baptisme, and the words so read, the meaning of them is plaine, by the former exposition as if the Apostle had said, in which Baptisme you being truly ingrafted into Christ, are partakers of the merit and power of Christ his resurrection, and by that power are raised up to newnesse of life.

Doff. 1.
Baptisme succeeds in the roome of circumcision, by the institution of Christ. Vñ, ground & warrant for the baptizing of infants.

Now here observe that the Apostle (by way of prevention of an objection) makes knowne that the Colossians had an outward signe and seale of their inward and spirituall circumcision, namely, Baptisme, that instead of being circumcised, they were baptized. Hence briefly note we, that Baptisme succeeds in the roome of circumcision, and that circumcision being now abolished, Baptisme is put in place of it by the institution of Christ. And hence wee may have one ground and warrant to prove the Baptisme of Infants, that the Baptisme of Infants is lawfull and warrantable by the word of God; for circumcision being administred to Infants in time of the old Testament, there is no reason why Baptisme succeeding it, should not bee administred to them in time of the Gospell, unlesse wee say that the condition of the Infants of Christians in time of the new Testament, is worse than of the children of the Jewes, in time of the old; and that by the coming of Christ, the grace of God is more obscure, and not so ample and large, or lesse testified to us than it was to them which lived under the Law, which to say were to cast reproach and contumely on Jesus Christ, and farre bee that from us. For concluding the next point, wee are to marke that the Apostle speaks here in the time present; *We are buried with him, &c.* Hence wee may take up this conclusion,

Doff. 2.
Baptisme is effectuall throughout the whole life in such as are truly baptized.

That Baptisme hath use after the administration of it, even throughout the whole life: in such as are truly baptized, it is effectuall to the taking away of sinne in all times of life, it seales up the washing away of all finnes, in all times of life, past, present, and to come. Hence it is that the Apostle Peter, 1 Epist. 3. 21. speaking of those who were before baptized, saith, *Baptisme which now saveth us*; and our Saviour Christ himselfe extends Baptisme in the force and efficacy of it, as well to the time to come, as to the time past, Mark. 16. 16.

He that shall believe and be baptized shall be saved. The reasons of this, that Baptisme is effectuell to the taking away of sinne in all times of life, are these two.

First, the foundation or substance of Baptisme is the covenant of grace; for in Baptisme God promisseth and covenanteth with the baptized, such as are inwardly baptized, to be their God, and this covenant is eternall; *Isa. 54. 10. The mountains shall remove, and the hills shall fall downe, but my mercy shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace fall away saith the Lord, that hath compassion on thee. Ierem. chap. 32. vers. 40. I will make saith the Lord an everlasting covenant with them, that I will never turne away from them to doe them good; but I will put my feare in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me;* therefore the force and efficacie of Baptisme is not limited to any time, but is of force, so long as the covenant is of force.

Secondly, Baptisme is the Sacrament of infusion, of ingrafting into Christ, sealing up our setting into Christ, which is onely once, never after to be done again, and therefore the force of it continueth in all times: for if it did not, then wee should have another ingrafting into Christ, and another seale on the same; but because we are once ingrafted into Christ, and after nourished in him, therefore we are once onely baptized, and many times receive the Sacrament of the Supper: and that plainly proves, that the force of Baptisme is extended to the whole life of man, to seale up the taking away of all finnes, both originall and actuall in regard of the guilt and punishment of them.

This for the use of it may discover the error of the Papists, who teach that Baptisme takes away all finnes that goe before it, but finnes committed after, are not thereby taken away, but must be taken away by their devised sacrament of penance: a doctrine directly opposite to that which I have delivered and proved, and such a device as destroyes the true use and nature of Baptisme, yea such as is full of much discomfort: we are to renounce it.

For a second use, consider wee the comfort of the truth delivered; it is full of sweet comfort to all such as are inwardly baptized, namely, such as are carefull to performe that part of the covenant made betweene God and them, that belongs to them, that is, to repent of their finnes, and to beleeve in Christ: to them it is full of heavenly comfort. For why? is Baptisme effectuell to seale up the washing away of all finnes, in all times of life? then in all times of trouble and distresse; especially in time of trouble and affliction of minde and conscience; have recourse, and goe with speed to thy Baptisme, there thou shalt finde comfort, thou shalt finde that God hath therein sealed up unto thee his love and favour, and his everlasting covenant of grace, and hath promised to be thy God forever, and hee will not faile of his promise. Men use often to looke on Deedes and Wils, and such like writings, that they may be resolved in matters of doubt. Looke thou often on the Wils of thy heavenly father, sealed and delivered to thee in thy Baptisme, and thou shalt be better resolved in the midst of thy greatest doubts. Thou shalt there find, that thou being once entred into covenant with God; no evill in thee can drive God from his promise, but that he will surely performe it, and bee thy God for ever, even good and gracious unto thee, in the forgiveness of all thy finnes; yea, that in thy Baptisme was sealed up unto thee the pardon of all thy sins, even of that sinne that haply now troubleth thy mind and conscience: and that is a matter of singular comfort, and often to bee thought on, by all such as are truly baptized, and let none but such take hold of this comfort, to them onely it belongs.

From these words of the Apostle wee are further taught, that as many as are truly and inwardly baptized, are by Baptisme made partakers of the merit and power of Christ his death, buriall and resurrection: the Apostle saith; through Baptisme they were buried with Christ, &c. and further prooffe of this wee heard

Reason 1.

Reason 2.

Vse 1.

Confutation of the Popish sacrament of penance.

Vse 2.

Comfort to all that finde themselves inwardly baptized.

Ded. 3.

Such as are truly and inwardly bapti-

zed are partakers of the merit and power of Christ his death, buriall and resurrection.

Use 1.
Confutation of a Popish distinction.

Use 2.
Triall, whether wee be inwardly baptized or no.

How we may know that we are dead and buried with Christ.

Use 3.
We are often to try whether we be inwardly baptized or no, and especially when the Sacrament of Baptisme is administered in our sight.

Reproofe of such as depart and goe from the assembly when the Sacrament of Baptisme is administered.

heard before out of Rom. 6. 3, 4, 5, 6, &c. together with the ground of it, namely, our union with Christ, that we being made one with Christ, haue communion and fellowship with him in his death, buriall, and resurrection. And hereby first we may see the wickednesse of that popish distinction, that Baptisme is for remission of finnes, life, and sanctification, but confirmation, by laying on the hands of the Bishop, which they hold also to bee a Sacrament, is for strength to fight against spiritual enemies, as though there were any sanctification without strength to fight against spirituall enemies, and as though when wee haue comfort from Baptisme against terrors and tentations, wee are not strengthened and encouraged to fight against them: it is a most absurd and foolish distinction. I leaue them, and for the use of this doctrine to our selues.

Is it so that such as are inwardly baptized, are by their Baptisme made partakers of the merit and power of Christ his death, buriall and resurrection? then let us hereby examine our selues; if wee finde our selues dead and buried with Christ, wee are inwardly Baptized, but if it bee otherwise, wee are not; and that wee may know when wee are dead and buried with Christ: remember we the condition of such as be dead and buried: they neither see nor heare they haue no sence nor feeling of any thing; if it be thus with us in respect of sinne, when the devill, and our owne corruption doe allure vs to sinne; if wee be not moved to it, but are as men dead in regard of it, wee are then through Baptisme dead and buried with Christ: but if when wee are moued to sinne wee haue hearts ready to yeald vnto it: for example, when wee are tickled with the lust of uncleannesse, if our hearts bee ready to consent, and our bodies to execute the same; if when wee are provoked by iniurie, our hearts bee presently enflamed with anger, our tongues ready to shoot out bitter wordes; wee are not yet through Baptisme partakers of the power of Christ his death and buriall, and consequently wee can haue no comfort by our Baptisme: and let us know it for a truth, that without inward Baptisme wee haue no part in Christ; outward Baptisme without the inward, is but the marke of a foole, that makes a vow, and afterwards breakes it as saith the Preacher, Eccles. chap. 5. vers. 3.

Let mee now adde one thing to this poynt, by way of further use and application of it, namely this: it being so, that as many as are truly Baptized, are by Baptisme made partakers of the merit and power of Christ his death, buriall and resurrection, and wee are hereby to examine our selues. Let us further know, that wee are often to examine our selues vpon euerie occasion; wee are to looke to our Baptisme, to see whether wee through Baptisme, bee dead, buried and raised up with Christ, or no, and especially then, when the Sacrament of Baptisme is administered in our sight; the administration of that Sacrament must be a visible Sermon to put us in mind of this duty, even then are we to enter into our owne hearts, and to examine our selues; it is therefore a great fault in such as depart and goe away from the publike assembly, (having no urgent extraordinary occasion) when the Sacrament of Baptisme comes to bee administered: as it is a bewitching, and an enchantment of Satan to hold such as haue Iesus Christ in lively manner described in their sight, and crucified before them, in the preaching of the Word, and administration of the Sacraments, to hold them from yeelding obedience to the truth, as the Apostle saith, Galath. 3. 1. so doubtlesse it is a subtilty and sleight of the Devill, as much as possibly hee can, to keepe men from seeing Christ crucified before them. From seeing the death of Christ in lively manner set before them, either in the preaching of the Word, or administration of the Sacraments: and to this end hee labours to fasten upon their mindes this conceit, that Baptisme onely concernes the little children that are to bee baptized, and some few others, and nothing at all belongs to them, but that they may depart the congregation at their pleasure, and without

without question he hath poysoned the minds of many with this pleasing conceit; and it is very needfull that this cunning working of Satan should be discovered unto us, and we put in minde of this fault, that we may learne to reforme it; to this end know wee, that Baptisme is a publike worke of the whole congregation, and every one of us hath a part of that worke, in witnessing the worke done by the Minister, in approving the same by one consent of the Spirit of Grace, by consenting in prayer and thanksgiving, yea, the whole body of the congregation ought with knowledge of Gods covenant, and joy of a member to be added to the Church, to addresse themselves to that worke; yea, every one of us ought particularly to take profit by it, as oft as wee see it administred. We are to call to minde our owne Baptisme, and see whether the Lord hath beene powerfull through that to kill, and bury sinne in us, and to raise us up to newnesse of life or no, and to remember the vow every one of us made in Baptisme: this is our duty, and these excellent uses ought wee to make of that holy Sacrament, whensoever we see it administred: therefore let no man thinke it a matter arbitrary and indifferent, that he may either stay, or goe away, at the time of the administration of it: no, no, it is our duty to attend it, and it is of excellent and profitable use to every one of us, and it is the subtilty of Satan to make us lightly regard it.

I passe on to further matter from these words of the Apostle, *buried with him through Baptisme, &c.* There is yet offered one thing more to be considered of us, and that of excellent use.

Hence we are further taught, that such as are ingrafted into Christ through Baptisme, are so neerely conjoynd with him, as that they are dead and buried with him, and raised up together with him; yea, what Christ did as Mediatour, they did with him as the members of his body. Hence it is that the Apostle, 1 Corin. chap. 12. verf. 12. (which is worthy to be observed of us) gives the name of Christ to all true believers in Christ, hee stiles them joyntly together, being one mysticall body, by the name and title of Christ, *so is Christ*, that is the Church of Christ: and hee gives the reason of it in the verse following, because by one spirit they are all baptised into one body; whether Jewes or Grecians, bond or free, and have beene all made to drinke into one spirit, and they are made one body, under one and the same head Christ Jesus: and hence it is that the Apostle, Galath. chap. 2. verf. 19. saith he was crucified with Christ; and in the third Chapter of this Epistle, the first verse: *If yee then be risen with Christ, seeke those things which are above*: as if he had said, if yee be made one with Christ, and as members of Christ be risen up with him, seeke those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. By all which places, and many others that might be brought, it is very cleare, that so neere is the union and coniunction of Christ and his true members ingrafted into him through Baptisme, that what Christ did as Mediatour, they did with him; when hee died, they died with him; when hee was buried, they were buried with him; when hee arose againe from death to life, they were raised with him.

First this may serve as a ground of excellent comfort to all such as are truly ingrafted into Christ by Baptisme, for why? consider it: is it so, that when Christ died, they that are ingrafted into him died with him, when hee was buried, they were buried with him; when hee rose againe, they were raised with him? What then shall disappoint them? What then shall deprive them of the fruit, the benefit, and the comfort of Christ his death, buriall, and resurrection? surely, not all the power of hell is able to doe it. Let the Papists say what they will, that iustifying faith, by which wee hold the merit of Christ his obedience, active and passive, may be utterly lost, which they are never able to prove; yet they will never be so shamelesse as to say, *wee can be frustrated and disappointed*

Dott. 4.

Such as are ingrafted into Christ through Baptisme, are so neerely conjoynd with him, as that the things done by Christ as Mediatour, they did with him as the members of his body.

Vse. 1.

Comfort to all such as are truly ingrafted into Christ by Baptisme.

disappointed of the fruit, benefit, and comfort of that which wee have already done together with Christ; can a member of Christ die with Christ, be buried with him, and raised up with him, and finde no benefit nor comfort by Christ his death, buriall, and resurrection; hee dying, being buried, and raised up for the good and comfort of his members? It is not possible: as many as are truly ingrafted into Christ, dyed with Christ when he dyed, were buried with Christ when he was buried, and were raised with Christ when hee was raised, and therefore cannot be disappointed of the benefit of his death, buriall, and resurrection, but shall be sure to finde the comfort of those deedes of Christ, both in life and death; yea, wee being once set into Christ, made one with Christ, our hope of heaven is so sure and certaine, that wee are said now to sit with him in Heaven already, they are the very words of the Apostle, Ephes. 2. 6. and that is a ground of sweet comfort for all such as find themselves engrafted into Christ through Baptisme.

Vse 2.
If ever wee looke for comfort by Christ the ground of it must be this, that wee are dead, and buried, and raised up with Christ.

Againe, it being so, that so neere is the union betwene Christ and his members, that when Christ died they died with him, when he was buried they were buried with him, when he arose from the dead, they were raised with him: If ever we looke for comfort by Christ, here must be the ground of it, that wee are dead and buried, and raised with Christ; for all our comfort is from our union with Christ, and as many as are truly united with him are dead, buried, and raised up with him; and therefore if ever we looke for comfort by him, we must finde our selves dead, buried, and raised up with him. Through the subtilty of Satan many deceive themselves; they thinke it sufficient if they can say, Christ died for them, and they are perswaded Christ shed his blood for them, though they never finde themselves crucified, dead, buried, and raised up with Christ.

Quest.

But we must know that this is not sufficient, this is not to build our comfort on a sure ground. No will some say, is not the merit of Christ his death, a sure ground to build on?

Ans.

I answer, yes, for those to whom it appertaines, and they are onely Christ his members, who were crucified with him: and if wee would finde and be assured of true comfort in Christ, wee must not rest in the fruit and merit of his death, but wee must goe a step further, and finde our selves crucified and dead with him.

Quest.

Answer.

If you aske how a man shall know this; the Apostle hath taught us, Rom. chap. 6. vers. 6. 7. *When the old man*, that is, our naturall corruption *is crucified with Christ*; as a malefactor executed ceaseth from theft, murder, and the like: so certainly, if thou be crucified with Christ, thou shalt finde thy selfe to cease from thy old finnes. And let this be ever the ground of thy comfort in Christ, that thou art crucified with Christ: even a wicked reprobate may fancie to himselfe that the merit of Christ his death belongs to him, but hee can never goe thus farre, to finde himselfe dead and buried with Christ. If then wee would goe beyond a reprobate, one that shall be damned in hell, let us not content our selves with a bare notion that Christ died for us, but let us labour to finde our selves dead, buried, and raised up with Christ: and that onely will assure us, that we through Baptisme are ingrafted into Christ, and made one with him, and that all the strength of hell shall never be able to make a division betwene Christ and us, and that will be unto us a sure ground of lasting comfort. It followeth [*through the faith of the operation of God*] in these words the Apostle sets downe (as wee have shewed) the inward meanes by which outward Baptisme was effectuell to the Colossians, and they made partakers of Christ his buriall and resurrection, namely faith, and that is described by the efficient cause of it, namely, the actuell working of the power of God. For the power of God is twofold; absolute, by which hee is able to doe more than he will; and actuall, equall to his will, and that power we are here to understand,

Interpretation.

stand, and the meaning of the words is briefly this, through faith, wrought in you by the actuall power of God.

Observe we hence in the last place, that Baptisme is effectuall to seale up the grace of God, touching washing away of finnes, and regeneration, onely in such as believe; it is not the outward act of Baptisme that doth conferre and give grace without faith. The Apostle saith plainly, *They are buried with Christ through Baptisme, and that through faith.* Yea, the proposition is generall, that the Sacraments without faith doe not actually conferre grace, Ephel. 5. 26. the Apostle saith, that *Christ sanctifieth his Church by washing with water*, and he there stailes not, but addes further *through the Word*, that is, through the Word of promise believed: for indeed the word it selfe is not a physcall or naturall instrument containing grace, but doth onely signifie the good will of God to his chosen, and being mixed with faith is profitable, and it is the power of God to salvation, onely to them that believe, Rom. 1. 16. Therefore the Sacraments which are but the Word of God made visible, doe not give grace by the outward act, but through faith in those that rightly receive them, they are effectuall to signifie and seale up the grace of God.

First, this may discover unto us the error of the Papists, who teach, that the Sacraments of the new Testament conferre grace, *ex opere operato*, yea, they say that the Sacrament of Baptisme doth it selfe wash away finnes, by force and vertue of the worke, and word, done, and said in the Sacrament; and for this they alleage, Act. 22. 16. *Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy finnes in calling on the name of the Lord.* Which Text, if it be well observed, makes directly against them; for to the Sacrament of Baptisme is joynd calling on the name of the Lord, which is a fruit of faith, and whereunto salvation is promised, Rom. 10. 13. It is therefore a meere device of their owne, that Baptisme, or the supper of the Lord doe conferre and give grace by the very worke done: we are to renounce it as an untruth and popish error.

And for the use of the point to our selves; is it so, that the Sacraments doe not actually give grace without faith? wee must then looke when wee partake of the Sacraments, that we bring faith with us; the Sacraments doe not worke faith, but seale it up where it is wrought; and if faith be not already in us, they seale up nothing but judgement unto us: yea, wee must mix the hearing of the Word and Prayer, with faith: or else our hearing will be unprofitable, and our prayers but lip-labour, and abominable. And hence it is that men finde no comfort in the promise of the Gospell in time of trouble: and hence also is it that men (by the threatnings of Gods Law) are more hardened, and the Word becomes a favour of death to their deepe condemnation. Labour wee therefore to believe, and to mix the Word and Sacrament with faith, or else the Sacrament shall be a seale of thy damnation, and the Word preached and heard by thee, shall aggravate thy judgement.

These words [*through the power of the operation of God*] understood as before they were expounded, doe further afford unto us this point of instruction:

That true faith by which we are united to Christ, and made one with him, and have fellowship with him in his death, buriall, and resurrection, is the effect of the mighty working power of God. True faith in Christ is not in us by nature, nor begotten by any power or strength of ours, but is onely wrought in us by the powerfull and almighty hand of God. Therefore the Apostle here calls it the faith of the operation of God, or the faith of Gods power. True faith is not onely the meere free gift of God, Phil. 1. 29. *To you it is given for Christ, that not onely ye should believe in him, but also suffer for his sake*, as all other graces are; but it is so wonderfull and so supernaturall a gift and grace of God, as it is wrought by the exceeding greatnesse of his power, by the working of his almighty power; as the Apostle saith, Eph. 1. 19. *That ye may know what is the exceeding*

Doll. 5.

Baptisme is effectuall to seale up Gods grace only in such as believe.

Vse. 1.

Discovery of the error of the Papists touching the force and effect of the Sacrament.

Vse. 2.

When we come to partake of the Sacrament, we must looke that wee bring faith with us.

Doll. 6.

True faith by which we are knit unto Christ, and have fellowship with him, is wrought in us by the powerfull hand of God.

Reason.

Use 1.

They deceive themselves who thinke they can at their owne time & pleasure believe in Christ.

Note.

ceeding greatnesse of his power towards us, which believeth according to the working of his mighty power: and the reason of it, that faith in Christ is so wonderfull, and so supernaturall a gift, is this: Because it not only above nature corrupted, but even above nature created: it was not in pure nature in time of mans innocencie before the fall, because then there was no neede of it; other gifts and graces were, and so other gifts and grace are now onely renewed in those that are effectually called by the working of God Spirit, they were before in nature created, but faith in Christ was not so; true faith in Christ is first wrought in such as are in their corrupt state and condition, and therefore is a most wonderfull, heavenly, and supernaturall worke of the power of God.

Let us then from hence be admonished to take heede wee deceive not our selves; let no man fancy to himselfe that faith is in his owne power, that he can at his owne time and pleasure believe in Jesus Christ. Herein the Divell doth delude many thousands of poore soules in the world; hee perswades them that either already they believe and have faith, and that easily conceived, without feeling of any working of the mighty power of God; yea, some are so besotted and blinded by the subtilty of Satan, that they thinke they have believed in Christ ever since they were borne, and never doubted of Gods mercy; or else if this slight be discovered, and be too palpable, and their eyes be opened to see it; then hee perswades with them, that though now they believe not, yet they may hereafter when they will, and that it is an easie matter to believe in Christ, and in their owne power to believe when they list: yea, that they may take hold of the mercy of God, and merit of Christ, at the very last houre of their life: and with this pleasing conceit hee deceives many, and drawes many a poore soule downe to perdition. Let us therefore learne this truth, that true faith in Christ is a wonderfull worke of Gods power: and make use of it to oppose it against the subtil and cunning slight of Satan, going about to perswade to the contrary. And (that wee may be yet further resolved and settled in this truth, and armed against the subtilty of Satan in this respect) consider we but this one thing, that if true faith in Christ were in a mans owne power, then certainly never any of them whose hearts are pressed downe with the burthen of sin, and the anger of God for the same, would despaire, but would take hold of Gods mercy.

Now lamentable experience sheweth the contrary, that at such time as some are brought to a sight of their sins, and a thorow sense and feeling of Gods anger against them for the same; they cannot then believe in Christ, nor take hold of Gods mercy by any meanes: it is the property of the cursed nature of man at such a time as that, to blaspheme God, and to dispaire of Gods mercy; and therefore it is not in mans power to believe when he list.

Looke on the example of *Judas*, did not he, when he saw the greatnesse of his sinne, and Gods hand was hevie upon him: did not he in a hellish horror of conscience and fearefull desperation, lay hands upon himselfe? If faith had been in his owne power, would he have done so? Certainly he would not. Let then all such as now in the security of their hearts (either seeing or feeling the weight of their sins) thinke that faith is in their owne power, and that they may believe in Christ when they will; consider it, that when Gods hand shall be hevie upon them, and the Lord shall let them see the greatnesse of their sinnes, that haply then they may seeke for faith and never find it: yea, it may be, that if then one would give them ten thousand worlds, they shall not be able to find any comfort in Christ. Let them thinke upon it, and learne to know that true faith in Christ is not in a mans owne power, but it is onely the worke of Gods mighty power: and never rest till they finde that the Lords hand hath wrought upon them, and in them the wonderfull supernaturall worke of faith: and that we be not deceived in this point of so great weight and consequence, our salvation depending upon it, (for without true faith in Christ there is no hope of salvation)

let

let us never rest till wee finde such a faith wrought in us, as is able even to break thorow the sense and feeling of our own sin, and Gods anger, and to take hold on Gods mercy & the merit of Christ for our comfort, and then we may be sure that faith is wrought in us by the mighty & powerfull work of Gods spirit.

Again, is it so, that true faith in Christ is the worke of the mighty power of God? then let all such as finde it truly wrought in them, herein comfort themselves: for certainly faith being wrought by the power of God, the same power shall ever preserve it from failing, and from being utterly lost. What power shall be able to vanquish and overcome the power of God? not all the power of heaven, earth, or hell, can be able to doe it, and hence it is, that true faith never utterly faileth. This comes to passe through the power of God, which (in all true members of Christ) is a continued power, working strength and stabilitie in them, and never wholly interrupted: it is not any vertue or excellencie in faith it selfe that makes it of never failing continuance: it is changeable in it selfe: and nothing in it selfe is unchangeable, but God: but it is the power of God ever working in some measure in the members of Christ, that makes faith not to faile. Hence it is, that the Apostle (1 Per. 1.5.) saith, that *wee bring begotten to a lively hope by the resurrection of Iesus Christ from the dead, &c. are kept by faith unto salvation*: but how? by any power in faith it selfe? No, but by the power of God. The words are very significant, wee are kept or guarded (for so the originall word signifieth) as with a strong garrison. True faith wrought in us by the power of God, is fenced and fortified by the same power of God against all hostilitie, so as no enemy of our salvation can breake in upon it to overcome it, it may be much weakened, and lessened in the measure, and the Lord may suffer it to bee eclipsed, and over-shadowed with some grievous temptation; but his power that hath begotten it, will never suffer it utterly to faile: no, the mightie power of God being the efficient working cause of faith, gives assurance to true believers that no adverse power whatsoever, can ever prevaile against their faith. Though the Lord, do sometimes afflict them grievously, yet I may bee bold to say, that the stroke of his owne hand cannot prevaile against their faith, because he will not: for his working power is only equall to his will, it goes not beyond it. Hence it was that *Job* said, chap. 13. 15. Though the Lord should kill him, yet he would believe in him: doubtlesse not boasting of any strength in himselfe, but being assured that his faith should ever bee supported by the mightie power of God, and not by any stroke of Gods hand, (no, not by the greatest of all, death it selfe) bee utterly quelled and extinguished: and upon this ground may all such as have true faith wrought in them, build their assurance that their faith shall never faile, nor be utterly lost, because it is wrought by the mightie power of God, and by the same power it shall ever bee preserved. And let all such as finde true faith in Christ truly wrought in them, herein comfort themselves.

Come we to the last words of this verse, wherein this working power of God is specified, to bee the same that raised up Christ from the dead, for that is the meaning of the Apostle in these words, (*which raised Christ from the dead*) as if hee had said, who by that working power of his, raised up Christ from the dead: the words are cleere, and need no further exposition; only lest we stumble at some places of Scripture which seeme not to agree with this, that God raised up Christ from the dead, in that it is said, *Christ raised up himselfe*, Ioh. 10. ver. 18. *No man taketh my life from mee, but I lay it downe of my selfe. I have power to lay it downe, and have power to take it againe.* Know we that the word (God) in this place is to bee taken essentially, not personally: for the whole Trinitie, and not for the first person God the Father: and the externall workes of the Trinitie are undivided.

God the Father raised up Christ,

Dd

Christ

Vse. 2

Comfort for
all such as find
true faith truly
wrought in
them.

Note.

Interpretation.

Christ as God raised up himselfe,

And God the holy Ghost raised him up.

And so there is good agreement of this place and other places of Scripture.

Now first, wee are to marke that the Apostle specifying the power of God by the effect of it, he makes choise of this effect rather than any other, the raising of Christ from the dead; hee saith not through the faith of the operation of God which created the world, or the like, but through the faith of the operation of God which raised Christ from the dead: hence wee may gather this conclusion.

Doctrine 7.

The all-sufficient and mightie power of God, appeared in raising up Christ from the dead.

Reason.

That the all-sufficient mightie power of God was wonderfully declared in raising Christ from the dead. In the resurrection of Christ did appear the exceeding greatnesse of Gods power, the Apostle doth plainly avouch it, Ephesians 1. 20. *What is the exceeding greatnesse of his mighty power towards us which be wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead.* Rom. 1. 4. The Apostle saith, *Christ was declared mightily to be the sonne of God, touching the power of sanctification by the resurrection from the dead.*

Now the reason of it, that Gods power was so exceedingly declared in raising Christ from the dead is this, because the humiliation of Christ by death, was exceeding great, never any was, nor could bee so compassed about with the bonds or sorrows of death, as they are called, Act. 2. 24. as hee was for a time. Therefore in the loosing of those bonds, there must needs appeare the greater power that ever was: for the strongest bonds require the mightiest power to loose them.

Vse.

When we are in the greatest distresse of body or minde, we are to consider the mighty power of God in raising up Christ from the dead, as a speciall meanes to strengthen us.

Now the Lord hath made it knowne that in raising up Christ from the dead, he declared his mightie power that wee should make use of it: and surely we are thus to take profit by it when wee are in the greatest distresse, either of body or minde: we are then to looke at the power of the Lord in raising up Christ from the dead, and to consider that the Lord thus shewed forth his power in loosing the bonds of death, when it seemed all hope was gone, and when death seemed to triumph over Christ, and that will raise up our faint hearts, and fill them with comfort in our greatest extremities. For indeed though the Lords power support us in time of some great distresse, otherwise we should utterly faint and fall flat under it, yet at such a time as that, wee are not able, through our infirmitie and weakenesse, cleerely to see and perceive that working power of the Lord; wee are therefore to lift up our eyes and to looke at the mightie power of the Lord appearing manifestly in raising up Christ from the dead, and setting him at his right hand in heaven, and that will bee a meanes to confirme and strengthen us in our hope and dependance on God at all times: wee know that if a sicke man can call to minde any one that was handled as he now is, and yet recovered his health, it comforts him much; in like manner if we in time of trouble and distresse can but remember the example of some meere man on whom the Lord hath shewed his mercie, and power in his deliverance, be it Iob or any other: Iam. 5. 11. the Apostle saith, *I have heard of the patience of Iob, and have knowne what end the Lord made, it is a notable meanes to comfort us, and to strengthen our hope: much more will it comfort us, if we set before us the mightie power of the Lord in raising Christ from the dead.* And therefore let us ever in time of great distresse, looke at the greatnesse of Gods power manifested in Christ, and that will comfort us.

Vse. 2

Gods power manifested in raising Christ from the dead, gives us assurance that we shall not be left in grave.

Yea, wee are thus to consider of the mightie power of the Lord in raising Christ from the dead, that hee being raised who was bound with such strong bonds of death: surely we shall not be left in grave: the Lord raised Christ when he was dead and laid in the grave: therefore an easie matter is it for him, when wee are dead and laid in our graves to raise us; if he raised him with his whole hand, hee can, and will raise us with his little finger: which is an excellent comfort,

comfort, to be thought on by all true beleevers.

Obferve further, that the Apoflle faith: Not raifed from the grave, but from the dead; whence it is cleare, that Chrift defcended into the ftate of the dead: he was among the dead, that as the Apoflle faith, Rom. 14. 9. *hee might be Lord both of the dead, and of the quicke*: and the comfort of this is delivered in the verfe before; Rom. 14. 8. *That whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we die unto the Lord, whether therefore we live or die, we are the Lords*. As many as truly beleeve in Chrift, though they be dead, yet ftill they are the Lords yea, their dead bodies are ftill within the covenant, and ftill ioyned to Chrift, which is a fweet comfort unto them.

Verf. 13. *And ye which were dead in finnes, and in the uncircumcifion of your flefh, hath he quickned together with him, forgiving you all your trespaffes.*

THis verfe as it hath relation to the generall drift of the Apoflle in this Chapter, it containes another argument, to prove all fufficiency of falvation to be found in Chrift, and nothing out of him to be needfull: the argument is this. You beleeving Coloffians are quickned together with Chrift, having in him free remiffion of all your finnes; therefore he is moft fufficient to falvation you need not circumcifion, or any thing elfe out of him.

That is the refpect of this verfe, to the generall purpofe of the Apoflle.

Now more fpecially it containes a further explication and declaration of their raifing up together with Chrift, fpoken of in the Verfe before, and that in regard of the power of Chrift his refurrektion in them. The Apoflle herein this Verfe fets downe their raifing up with Chrift in another phrafe, and forme of fpeech, that they were partakers of the power of Chrift his rifing, to the quickning of them, that the Lord had quickned them together with Chrift, and this their quickning is further amplified, and fet before them by their ftate and condition, in which they were before that quickning, by their ftate in which they were by nature; that they were dead, and the Apoflle doth further explaine himfelfe, what manner of death hee meant (namely) not a corporall, but a fpiritual death, even a death in finne, and the uncircumcifion of their flefh. *And ye which were dead in finnes, and in the uncircumcifion of the flefh, &c.* Then followes in the laft words, the ground of their quickning (namely) the remiffion of their finnes, *forgiving you all your trespaffes.*

Come wee to the words as they are laid downe by the Apoflle, and firft of thefe words; *And ye which were dead in finnes, and in the uncircumcifion of your flefh*. That we may rightly conceive thefe words (*dead in finnes*) wee muft know that they are not to bee underftood of corporall death, the feparation of the foule from the body, and that without repentance (as our Saviour faith, Iohn 8. 21. *ye fhall die in your finnes*; that the Coloffians were fo dead in their finnes, but of fpiritual death in finne; and there is a double fpiritual death of fuch as are yet living, to refpect of finne: a death to finne, whereof the Apoflle fpeaketh Rom. 6. 2. *How fhall wee that are dead to finne, yet live therein*, and a death in finne, and thefe two are as contrary one to the other, as life and death: for to be dead to finne, is to renounce finne, and to be free from the power of finne: but to be dead in finne, is to live under the power of it, to be fo under finne as a dead man, is under death, and fo we are to underftand the Apoflle in this place. And ye which were under the power and rule of finne.

By the word (*finnes*) wee are to underftand actual and original finne; yet left fome fhould thinke original finne excepted, the Apoflle addes further (*uncircumcifion of your flefh*) that they were dead in the uncircumcifion of the flefh (that is) in original finne and corruption. Now this the Apoflle fets

Doct. 8.
Chrift defcended into the ftate of the dead.

Ufe
True beleevers whether they live or die, are ftill the Lords.

Interpretation.

And

And

And

And

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 1. 1. 1.
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 1. 1. 1.

Doctr. 1.
 Men in their
 naturall state
 are so under
 the power of
 sinne, as a dead
 man is under
 the power of
 death.

downe by way of allusion, to the fore-skin of the flesh, and calls it uncircumcision of the flesh, because the uncircumcision of the Gentiles was a signe of their originall sinne inherent in them, as the uncircumcision of the Jewes was a signe of the taking away of the same. This then briefly is the sense and meaning of these words, as if the Apostle had said: You that were in the time of your naturall state, and condition, under the power and dominion of sinne, both actuall and originall, as a dead man is under the power of death.

Now first, hence it is cleare, that men in their naturall state are so under the power of sinne, as a dead man is under the power of death; they are not sicke of their sin, or wounded by it, or halfe dead, but stark dead in sinne, they have neither spirituall life, nor the actions nor faculties of that life. And that this is the condition of men in their naturall state, it is cleare by other formes of speech in Scripture, setting out the state of men before conversion: as that they are called darknesse, Ephes. 5. 8. not darke or blinde, but even *darknesse* it selfe, giving us to understand, that they are nothing but darknesse. Hence they are called *flesh*, Ioh. 3. 6. not fleshly, but flesh it selfe, and the wisdom that is in them, is enmity against God, Rom. 8. 7. not onely an enemy or contrary, but even enmity it selfe. Hence it is that the Apostle, 1 Cor. 2. 14. sets out the naturall man, not onely to bee voyd of actuall knowledge of God, and of all good things, but voyd of all potentiall knowledge of them: he cannot by any power inherent in himselfe come to the knowledge of them, *The naturall man* (saith he) *perceiveth not the things of the spirit of God*, there is his actuall want of knowledge touching spirituall things: and lest some should say this comes to passe, because he doth neglect, or contemne them, hee never labours to know them: the Apostle addes further, neither can hee know them, let him labour never so much, there is his want of power to know them, the reason followeth, because they are spirituallly discerned, a plaine evidence and prooffe, that a man in his naturall state is so under sinne, as a dead man is under death; sinne holds naturall man as fast under the power of it, as death doth a dead man under the power of it, hee cannot move his minde to thinke, his will to like, and affect any thing that is good; he is as a dead man in respect of any thing that is good; the Scripture is both plaine and plentifull in the prooffe of this truth.

First, this confutes *Pelagius* and his followers, who hold that by the power of nature, men might come to salvation.

Ps. 1.
 Confutation of
 the errors of
 the Pelagians
 and of the Pa-
 pists.

Againe, this meets with that erroneous opinion of the Papists, who say we may prepare our selves to receive grace; this is utterly false, if the doctrine now delivered be true, which indeed is most true, grounded on the word of God. For what can a dead man doe to his owne quickning and raising up from the grave? can he turne himselfe, and make himselfe fit to be raised up? wee know it is not possible; take him by the hand, lift him up, yet hee cannot stand, unlesse a soule be put into him: no more can a naturall man move himselfe towards grace or any good thing, unlesse he have spirituall life put into him: No? saith the Papist, hee may give his free consent to his owne quickning: how can that be, seeing he is dead? why saith the Papist, albeit man in sinne be dead, in the way of Grace, yet he lives naturally, and hath free will in naturall and civill actions, which will of his being by grace fortified, and as it were lifted up to an higher degree of perfection, can then concur and work with grace to faith, and all good workes necessary to life everlasting. These be their owne words: Now this is a poore and silly shift, for first, they speake not *ad idem*, or to the purpose, though it be granted, that a man lives naturally, and hath free will in naturall and civill things, doth it thereupon follow, that he hath power by nature to will or give consent to his owne conversion? no by no means it will never follow on that ground.

Obiect.

Answer.
Objection.

Answer.

Againe,

Againe, whereas they say that the naturall will being by grace fortified, and
lifted up unto an higher degree of perfection, can then conuince and warke
with grace to faith, and all good workes necessarye to life everlasting: who see
not that they speake against themselves, for this proues not that the will of man
concurrith by its owne naturall power, which is the point in question: but the
cleane contrary, that the will onely by grace is enabled, so will that which is
good, and that is the doctrine of our Church, that the will of man in the first act
of conversion is merely passive, able to doe nothing: but being revived and
quicken'd by the Spirit of God, and of unwilling made willing, it is then able
to chuse, will, and affect that which is good. Thus wee see how the Papists
enrange themselves in their owne words, and fallen they be sware into that
which is against their owne doctrine (to leave them to vanish in their owne
speculations: and for the use of this to our selues.)

Is it so, that men in their naturall state are even dead in sinne? what cause then have naturall men or women, such as have no softening of their conversion, but can witnes (if they deale truly with themselves) that they never felt any true change in themselves, but still are the same that they have been heretofore. what cause I say have they that are in that state, to swell in pride, and to be lifted up with an high conceit of themselves? admit they have excellent naturall parts of body and minde, as wit, capacitie, judgement, strength, beauty, and they have riches, honours, or other outward things; yet surely they may hence see, that if they bee in their naturall condition, they are as a dead corpe that is trimmed and stucke with so many goodly flowers; yea the consideration of their naturall condition may give them just cause (in stead of bearing their heads aloft, and looking bigge) to droope, and to hang downe their heads, yea to shed rivers of teares, in bewailing their miserie, for all their excellent ornaments and abilities are stained and defiled by their owne filchinesse, as the Apostle saith, Tit. 1. 15. To those that are deyled and unbelieving is nothing pure, even their mindes and consciences are defiled; yea which is a further degree of miserie, their good actions, such as are good in their kinde, and commanded of God, by them are defiled: they are to them but as a stinking savour that comes from a filthy dead carrion. If this were well considered it would pull downe the pride and peacocks feathers of many, and stirre them up to use all good meanes to hasten out of this miserable condition.

And let me not pass by one further use of this point.

It being so, that men in their naturall state are under sinne as a dead man is under death: no marvel then though many that are present in the congregation, when the word is preached, have no eares to heare it with profit. Sound a trumpet in a dead mans eare, and hee heares it not, so is it with naturall men, they are as dead men, and let the Preacher crie out and lift up his voyce like a trumpet, Eſai. 58. 1. they are no more moved by the word, either by the comforts or threats of it, than the dead bodies that lie in the grave, under their feet, unlesse it please God to put life into them: and let as many as have eares to heare with profit and comfort, bleſſe God for the same, and give him the glory of that great mercie.

The next thing we are to mark in these words is this: The Apostle speaking in the time past, (*ye which were dead in sins, &c.*) signifying that the Colossians had been so, but now were not. Hence we may gather this conclusion.

That the chosen of God, such as belong to Gods election, before their conversion are in the same estate with the wicked reprobate, not in regard of election and Gods purpose, for so there is a difference betweene these and the wicked, even before their calling, they are then beloved of God, as such as are only knowne to him to be in the number of his chosen, and afterwards to be

[illegible]

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Such as be in
their naturall
state have no
cause to bee
proud, and to
be lift up
with an high
conceit of
themselves.

15/5/54

Great mercy,
God for that
shall fall to
me to be
testified called
All that are of-

$$V(c_0)$$

Discovery of
the cause why
the word prea-
ched is nothing
profitable to
some.

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Def. 2.
Gods chosen
before their
conversion, are
in the same
strength

Reason.

their natural
fire have no
candle to be
brought and to
be lit up
with a light
concentric of
themselves.

All that are effectuallly called
are to be thankfull to
God for that
great mercy.

Note.

It is no strange thing in scripture to put down the name of the sign for the thing signified by it.

Because all both elect and reprobate are borne in the same estate, the elect have no priviledge above the reprobate in regard of birth, but are conceived and borne in sinne as well as they: therefore till it please God to call and convert them, they are in respect of sinne, in the same state. Therefore hence wee learne the benefit and comfort of effectuall calling: that our calling out of our naturall condition, is a great mercie of God; before that, wee lie wallowing in sinne, and pleasing our selves in a course of sinne; yea, we have no minde to any thing that is good; we are in the same state with the wicked, and such as shall be damned. This then is a sweete meditation, when wee can truly call to minde, that wee were sometimes in the same state with the wicked, but now are not; yea, this is more comfortable than to thinke on election or redemption by Christ; for this gives us assurance of our election and redemption, 1 Pet. 1. 10. *Give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if yee doe these things, ye shall never fall:* therefore it is most sweete and comfortable when wee can truly say, wee were sometimes thus or thus given over to sinne; but now are not, and especially when wee can truly say so, in respect of our best pleasing sinne, that we were sometimes held under the power and tyranny of that sinne, but now are not, though strength and ability bee not wanting for the practice of it, yet now we have no pleasure in it, we strive against it, and wee avoid occasions leading unto it: if we be able to say thus, that is a comfortable thing indeed.

Againe, for a second use, is it so that the chosen of God before their conversion and effectually calling are in the same state with the reprobate in regard of bondage under sinne? then let all such as are effectually called bee thankfull to God for so great a mercie, in pulling them with his mightie hand out of that miserable condition. And to this end, let them often call to minde their former condition, and that will stir them up to thankfulness. No doubt this is one cause, why the Lord will have a remnant of originall corruption to remaine in the most regenerate during the time of this life, that the sense of that with griefe, and desire to bee loosed from it, may put them in remembrance in what state they were before they got life in Iesus Christ. Let us therefore by this Monitor, that is lodged with us, bee put in minde of our dutie: let us often call to minde our former miserable bondage under sinne: then the life wee have gotten in Christ, will bee sweeter, and wee shall bee stirred up to be more thankfull to God for the same.

The next thing to bee considered, is the phraſe and forme of ſpeech here uſed by the Apoſtle, ſetting out the originall corruption of the Colofſians; hee calles it uncircumciſion of the fleſh, alluding to the fore-ſkinne of the fleſh. From this forme of ſpeech occaſion is given to ſpeake of the extent and ſpreading of originall corruption, that it is as a ſkinne ſpread over the heart, and over all the powers of the ſoule; but of that wee have already ſpoken, verſ. 11. onely that I will obſerve from this phraſe ſhall bee this; In that the Apoſtle calls originall corruption uncircumciſion of the fleſh, which was but a ſigne of it, wee may ſee it is no ſtrange and unuſuall thing in the Scripture to put downe the name of the ſigne, for the thing ſignified by it: this manner of ſpeaking is very frequent in the word of God: wee finde circumciſion called the covenant, Gen. 17. 14. which was but the ſigne of the covenant, and the paſchall Lambe the Paſſeover, Exod. 12. 11. which was but a ſigne of it; and

For the bread and wine in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, are said to bee the body and blood of Christ, which are but visible signes of his body and blood. And the reason of this is, because together with the outward signes, the things signified are truly offered: there is a sacramentall union betwene the signe and the thing signified, together with the signe, doth God truly offer the thing signified. We must therefore take heed wee abuse not the outward signes of the Sacraments: the abuse of them reacheth to the thing signified by them, even the body and blood of Christ. And hence it is that the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 11. 27. *Whoſoever eateth this bread, and drinketh the cup of the Lord unworthily, ſhall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*, not as the Papiſts groſſely imagine, because hee eateth and drinketh the body and blood of Christ really and corporally present, but because the abuse of the signe reacheth to the thing signified. We must therefore take heed, that we come not to the Lords table unreverently, and unprepared, without a measure of true faith, and true repentance, for so doing wee make our selves guilty of the body and blood of the Lord Iesus, the abuse of the signe ever redoundeth to the abuse of the thing signified by it.

And againe, let such as wilfully withdraw themselves from the outward Sacrament, know that they put away from them the things signified by the outward elements of it, even the blessed body and precious blood of Iesus Christ, and consequently they put away salvation from them. Let all such as carelessly and wilfully absent themselves from the Lords table thinke upon it,

It followeth (*hath bee quickned together with him*) In these words the Apostle declareth the raising up of the beleiving Colossians together with Christ, in regard of the power of his resurrection to their quickning. I will briefly open the sense and meaning of the words (*hath bee*) (that is) God (*quickning*) this quickning is to bee understood not of a raising up of their dead bodies out of the grave, but of a vivification and quickning of them in this life, and that being twofold, either a deliverance from standing subject to hell and eternall death, and a donation of right to eternall life: or a freedome from spirituall death in sinne, and working in them a spirituall life of holinesse. We are to understand it of this second, as most fitly opposed to their death in sinne, that they were freed from death in sinne, and had a spirituall life of holinesse wrought in them. (*Together with him*) that is together with Christ, raised from the dead, and that by vertue of his resurrection, they beleiving in Christ: and being one with him, were partakers of the power of his resurrection to their quickning. Thus then are wee to conceive these words, as if the Apostle had said; You that were dead in sinne, hath God freed from your spirituall death in sinne, and wrought in you a spirituall life and holinesse by vertue of Christ his resurrection, you being true beleiving members of Christ, and one with him by faith. We had these words in substance in the verse before; I will therefore onely observe one thing from them, namely this; Hence it is cleere, that as many as truly beleive in Christ are partakers of the power of his resurrection.

They being raised with Christ are partakers not onely of the merit of his resurrection, but are also partakers of the vertue of it, they are quickned together with him, they are freed from the power and dominion of sinne, and have the spirituall life of grace and holinesse wrought in them: And this is that the Apostle laboured for, and accounted so excellent, Phil. 3. 10. The Apostle Peter, 1 Pet. 1. 3. saith plainly, *Wee are regenerate unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Iesus Christ from the dead*. The Scripture is full of prooſe to this purpose: consider wee the reason of it, namely this, Christ our head being risen from the dead, now lives only a spirituall life: before his death, he lived a naturall life, yet without sinne, he did eat, drinke, sleep, and used all actions of life;

Reason.

Vſe. 1

We must take heed we abuse not the outward signes of the Sacrament, the abuse of them is very dangerous.

Vſe. 2

Reprooſe of such as wilfully absent themselves from the Lords table.

Interpretation.

Doctrin 4.

As many as truly beleive in Christ, are partakers of the power and vertue of his resurrection.

Reason.

but in his resurrection, he purway that naturall life, and has now lives only in spirituall life; and therefore it is not possible that any of his members should still remaine in their spirituall death of sinne; it cannot be but they are partakers with Christ in his spirituall life, and by the power of the same spirit dwelling in Christ, and in his members, are they quickned with a new life of grace and holinesse.

Let no man then deceive himselfe, let none of us thinke wee truly beleve in Christ, unless wee finde in us the power of his resurrection, that was stricken from the power of sinne, and have a spirituall life wrought in us. If wee live in any known sinne and lie under the power of it, as in drunkenness, uncleanness, or the like, wee falsely persuade our selves, wee beleve in Christ. And know it for a truth, that as it is said, *Revel. 3. 6.* *He that is partaker in the first resurrection, the second death shall never have power on him:* so on the contrary, such as are not partakers of the first resurrection, such as are not raised up from their death in sinne, they shall certainly feele and endure the second death. And let this it renews up not to distrust our sinne, and feele the vertue of Christs resurrection freeing us from the death of sinne, and quickning us with a new life of grace and holinesse.

Againe, is it so that as many as truly beleve in Christ, are partakers of the vertue of his resurrection, quickning them with a new life of holinesse; then may as many as finde themselves freed from the death of sinne and quickned by grace to a new life, comfort themselves with assurance that they have such in doe truly beleve in Christ. Yes; the comfort of this is yet greater, they may hereby assure themselves of the continuance of the Lords mercies towards them, that he will continue to be good and merciful to them for ever for kindnes of his own mere mercy that he quickned them being dead in their sinnes. The Apostle shewes it plainly, *Ephes. 2. 4.* *and he having vouchsafed his mercie to the quickning of them; that mercie of his shall never forsake them, but shall be reached forth unto them for ever.* It is the Apostles argument to prove the continuance of Gods love, *Rom. 8. 9. 10.* As many therefore as have found the love and mercy of God to raise them up from the death of sinne; may assure themselves that the same love and mercie shall ever be reached out unto them; that is a singular comfort to all true believers. Come wee to the last part of this verse.

Forgiving you all your iniquities. In some booke we finde, *Forgiving us all our iniquities.* The Apostle naming himselfe, and other believing Jewes, as well as the Colossians, and other Gentiles. It is not materiall whether we reade *(you)* or *(us)* it comes all to one purpose, that remission of sinnes is the ground of the spirituall quickning death of Jewes and Gentiles, dead in sinnes by nature.

The word translated *(Forgiving)* doth properly signifie freely forgiving, and in the originall it is put downe in the time past, and doth signifie having freely forgiven *(we passed)* that word in the originall, is the same wee had in the beginning of this verse, and doth signifie both a tuall and originall sinne, any aberration or declining from the law of God; and so the Apostles meaning in these words is briefly this: Having freely forgiven you all your sinnes, both originall and actual.

First, here observe wee the context, that the Apostle makes the forgiveness of their sinnes the ground of their quickning, and so he speaks in the time past, having forgiven us, as if he had said: You have been quickned, when hee had forgiven you your sinnes.

Hence note we thus much: That forgiveness of sinnes is by order of nature before spirituall quickning; by grace, though in time they goe together, when the Lord doth vouchsafe to forgive any man his sinnes, at the same time hee works

None truly beleve in Christ, but such as find in themselves the power of his resurrection.

Comfort for such as find themselves freed from the power of sin, and quickned by grace to a new life.

Interpretation.

Doct. 5.
Forgiveness of sinnes is by

workes in him a meaſure of grace and holineſſe; yet in naturall order remiſſion of finnes goe before ſuch ſpirituall life of grace and holineſſe inherent: for as the Apoſtle hath plainly taught us, Rom. 8. 30. Juſtification goes before glorification; and under glorification hee comprehends ſanctification; now one part of Juſtification is remiſſion of finnes: therefore that in nature is before any meaſure of grace and holineſſe wrought in us.

The Lord doth firſt diſcharge a man of the guiltineſſe of his ſinne, and waſh away that in the blood of Ieſus Chriſt, and then free him from the dominion of ſinne, and purge his conſcience from dead works to ſerve the living God, as the holy Ghoſt ſpeakes, Heb. 9. 14.

Is it ſo that remiſſion of finnes ever goes before ſpirituall life of grace and holineſſe?

Surely then it is good argument to ſay:

I am freed from the power of my ſinne: Therefore from the guilt and puniſhment of my ſinne.

A man may certainly conclude and gather from his ſanctification, the remiſſion of his finnes. The devill will ſuffer any man to ſay his finnes are forgiven, and he hopes to be ſaved: but would any man prove it, and ſo prove it, as he may ſettle his owne heart in aſſurance of it, and put the devill to ſilence, that he ſhall not bee able to gainſay it? let him then prove it from his owne quickning by grace, and that is an holy kind of reaſoning, and an argument that will never deceive him. If any be able to ſay truly, whereas I was dead in ſinne, and to every good worke reprobate, the Lord hath put into me an heavenly life, and made me active and lively to doe his will, both in my generall and particular calling; yea, it is meate and drinke to me to doe his will: the ſame party may ſafely ſay, my finnes are forgiven. Let it bee thought on by ſuch, as in any meaſure finde themſelves truly ſanctified. The next thing that offers it ſelfe to bee conſidered, is the word here uſed [*forgiving*] which ſignifies (as I have ſhewed) freely forgiving: whence we are taught thus much;

That forgiveſſe of finnes is free, it is of the meere free grace and mercy of God, that finnes are forgiven. Which point is plainly taught by the Apoſtle; not only here, but in divers other places. Rom. 3. 24. he ſaith in expreſſe termes, *we are juſtified freely by his grace*, not only by the grace of God, but freely giving us to underſtand, that our juſtification (whereof one part is remiſſion of finnes) is of grace, and that of meere grace, and of nothing but grace, Ephes. 1. 7. Hee ſaith, *we have forgiveſſe of ſinner, according to his rich grace*, the Apoſtle is not content to ſay according to grace, but according to his rich grace, thereby ſignifying not onely neceſſary ſufficiency, but even ſuperabundant plenty of grace, and ſo excluding all other things as every way needleſſe. It were eaſie to adde to theſe, otherlike places, but theſe may be ſufficient: yet before we come to the uſe of this poynt, a doubt muſt be removed,

Some may ſay, is forgiveſſe of finnes free? it ſeemes not ſo, for it is the merit of Chriſt, hee hath ſatiſfied for finnes, therefore the pardon of them is not free.

It is true indeed, in regard of Chriſt, forgiveſſe of finnes is not free, he hath paid the ranſome for ſinne, but in reſpect of us it is every way free; yea therein appears the greater grace and riches of Gods mercy towards us, as the Apoſtle ſpeakes, in that God gave his Sonne to die for us, and to ſatiſſie for our finnes. It remains then a truth, that forgiveſſe of finnes is to us every way free, and of the meere grace and mercy of God.

Come we to the uſe of this: firſt, this meets with that doctrine of the Pa-piſts, who teach, that men by workes of pennance (as they call them) merit the removall of the temporall puniſhment that is due to ſinne. Chriſt (ſay they) hath taken away the guilt of ſinne, and the eternall puniſhment of it; but men muſt ſatiſſie

order of nature before ſpirituall life of grace and holineſſe inherent.

Reaſon.

Vſe.

A man may certainly gather from his ſanctification, the remiſſion of his finnes.

Doct. 6.
Forgiveſſe, of finnes is of the meere free grace and mercy of God.

Objection.

Anſw.

Vſe.

Confutation of Popiſh humane ſatiſſactions for the temporall puniſhment of ſinne.

(at isle for the temporall punishment, either here, or in purgatory. This cannot stand with the truth now delivered, that forgiveness of sinnes is every way free; how can that be every way free, which we in some sort merit and satisfie for? it cannot be freely given and deserved: now it is the plaine text of the Apostle, that we are iustified freely.

Obiect.

Yes, but saith the Papist, the word [*freely*] doth not exclude all our working and suffering in that matter of iustification; for by your owne doctrine it is necessary that we beleve and bring forth new fruits.

Answer.

To this they are easily answered; it is true, the word [*freely*] doth not exclude faith and the fruits of it, but it shuts out all merit of faith, and of repentance, and other good fruits, and doth plainly shew, that there is nothing in us, no not faith it selfe, that doth merit remission of our sinnes, it is of grace, and of meere free grace, they cannot possibly (by any shift) avoid the evidence of that place. I leave them and come to our selves, and for the use of the poynt to our selves.

Use 2.

Our owne unworthinesse must not discourage nor hinder us from apprehending Gods mercy for the pardon of our sinnes.

Is it so that forgiveness of sinnes is free and of the meere grace and mercy of God? then let not any unworthinesse of ours, discourage and hinder us from apprehending the mercy of God for the pardon of our sinnes: remember we that pardon of sin is freely given, it is not any way deserved by us; therefore doubt not of it in regard of thine owne unworthinesse. Indeed if remission of sin did depend upon any worthinesse in us, we had then great cause to doubt of it; but it depends onely in the meere free grace and mercy of God. Let not therefore our unworthinesse discourage us. it is a sweet saying, 1 Ioh. 1. 9. often to be remembered of us, *If we acknowledge our sinnes, God is faithfull and iust to forgive us our sinnes.* If God can be unfaithfull (not if we be unworthy) but, I say, if God can be unfaithfull, which is not possible, then may wee doubt of the pardon of our sinns humbly acknowledged: yea, marke what comfort we may raise from this place, if we see our unworthinesse and with broken harts acknowledge it: God is faithfull and iust to forgive it, be it never so great. I speake not this to hearken any one in a course of sin, that any should heape sin upon sinne, because our unworthinesse of ours may discourage us: no, no, that is to favour this doctrine to death and not to life, and to turne the grace of God into presumption: but I speake it for the comfort of such as through weaknesse, either are, or have been may be afraid, and stand in doubt of the pardon of their sinnes, in regard of their great unworthines: they see themselves unworthy wretches, that they doubt whether mercy belongs to them for the pardon of their sinnes, or no. Let such know for their comfort, that the Lords mercy depends not on their worthinesse it is freely given where it pleaseth the Lord to bestow it, for the pardon of sin: yea let them know further for their comfort, that they (seeing and bewailing their unworthinesse, and desiring pardon of their sinnes) want no merit.

Quest Answer.

How so, will some say?

Answer, they have the mercy of God, and the infinite merit of Christ belonging unto them for the pardon of their sinnes, and therefore they have no cause to bee discouraged, in regard of their owne unworthinesse, so long as he Lord abounds in mercy, so long do they abound in merit; and that is a sweet comfort to be thought on, and especially then let us thinke on it, when our owne unworthinesse doth stand up betweene us and the mercy of God for the pardon of our sinnes.

Doct. 7.
Such as truly beleve in Christ have full remission of all their sinnes.

One thing more is to be observed from these words, namely this, the Apostle saith [*forgiving you all your trespasses*] hence it is cleere, that such as truly beleve in Christ, have entire and full remission of their sins, not any one of their sinnes shall bee laid to their charge; they are free from the guilt and punishment of them all. This doth the Apostle plainly teach, Rom. 8. 1. *I here is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Iesus, which walke not after the flesh, but after the spirit:*

rit: and David saith, Psal. 103. 3. Praise the Lord my soule and forget not all his
benefits, which forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thine infirmities.

The use of it serves to comfort us exceedingly, as many of us truly beleeve in Christ, our sins can hurt us no more, than if they had never bene done; no nor the most hainous amongst them; no nor those wherein wee have continued long, and have doubled and repeated often, nor those we have done with much boldnesse and presumption; we now beleeving in Christ, have free forgiveness of them all, not one of them excepted, which is an exceeding great comfort, let us further follow it in our owne private meditations.

Againe, is it so, that wee beleeuing in Christ haue forgiveness of all our sins? we must then learne so to forgive our brethren, it is the Apostles rule, Ephes. 4. 32. *Forgive one another, even as God for Christs sake forgiveth you.* Away then with all maimed and halfe forgiveness of our brethren forgiving one offence, and retaining an other unforgiven; and let us take heed in this case of the reasoning of the flesh: as forsooth, the matter is so grievous, so prejudiciall, wee could be content to be entreated to forgive many other offences, but this we cannot, with many other the like shifts. Let us remember that God forgives us all our sins be they never so great, why then should not wee forgive our brethren? if we say we deserve better of them, so doth God of us: if wee meant him or her no harme, no more doth God us: if wee say the party is farre our inferiour, Why? what are we to the Lord? if wee many times have forgiven them, with warning to doe no more so; hath not God much oftner forgiven us? Yea, times without number. Learne we then to be mercifull, as our heavenly Father is mercifull; and know that *blessed are they mercifull, for they shall find mercy, and there shall be indigent mercifesse to him that sheweth no mercy,* Iam. 2. 13. 23.

Verf. 14. And putting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, he even took it out of the way, and fastened it upon the Cross.

IN this verse, as it hath respect to the generall drift of this Chapter: That all things out of Christ (in the matter of salvation) are nothing worth. The Apostle deales against the Legall ceremonies of the Jewes, and proves them to be superfluous, yea pernicious in that case: his argument is this: The hand-writing of ordinances, or the Legall ceremonies that was in time of the Law, Christ hath put out and taken away by his death.

Therefore to revoke it, and to seeke to bring it in force againe, which false teachers labour to doe, in urging circumcision and the ceremonies of the Law, were not only vaine, but pernicious and hurtfull.

That is the generall purpose of the Apostle in this verse. More particularly, it contains an amplification of the benefit spoken of in the last words of the verse foregoing, namely, the full remission of all our finnes; understanding those words both of the Jewes and Gentiles beleeving; and the Apostle doth amplifie that benefit in this verse, by the meanes whereby wee attain it, that we are fully discharged from the guile and punishment of all our finnes, by full satisfaction made for them by Christ.

Now that full satisfaction is not in plaine termes propounded, but is laid downe in the prooffe of it, and is proved by an argument taken from the disannulling or cancelling of a bill or bond, which did witnesse our guiltinesse of sinne, and by which we stood bound over to the punishment of sin, that Christ hath cancelled that bond, and therefore fully satisfied for our finnes: that is the summe and substance of this verse.

In the verse we have these particular things laid before us:

First, a description of that bill or bond which did testify our guiltiness of sinne,

Use 1

Comfort to
all true belee-
vers that none
of their finnes
can hurt them.

Vf. 3

We must for-
give our bre-
thren offending
us, as God for-
giveth us sin-
ning against
him.

finne, and that by the nature of it before the cancelling, that it was an hand-writing, or an obligation, or bond of ordinances.

Secondly, the cancelling of that bond by Christ which is set downe by certaine degrees, ascending or going upward one above another, as that hee put it out, that he tooke it out of the way, and that hee fastened it on the Crosse. In which words is implied the meanes by which Christ cancelled the bond, namely, his Crosse, or death on the Crosse.

Thirdly, how farre forth he hath cancelled it, namely, so far as it was against us, and contrary to us.

Come we to the words as they are laid downe in order, and first of these words: *And putting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us.*

Interpre-
tation.

[*And putting out*] or having put out: The originall word signifies, having blotted out, and that perfectly, so as not one letter or title remaines unblotted out: [*hand-writing of ordinances*] by these words we are properly to understand the law of ceremonies, belonging to the Iewes in time of the old Testament, touching circumcision and divers washings, and other ceremonies, which the Apostle calls *the law of commandments which standeth in ordinances*, Ephes. 2. 15. but withall (as I take it.) We are further to understand by this *hand-writing of ordinances*, even the whole morall law of God; because the Apostle in this verse (no doubt) would make knowne the benefit of Christ his death both to Iewes and Gentiles, that it brought to all that beleeve in him, not onely remission of finnes, but a freedome from the Law, both ceremoniall and morall (which was against us, which was contrarie to us) that is, so farre forth as it did convince, accuse, and condemne us for sinne, and bound us over as a bond to the punishment of sinne.

Quest.
Answer.

Now if any demand how the legall ceremonies of the Iewes, were thus an hand-writing of ordinances against them.

I answer, they were so in regard of the use of them. The Iewes in using of them did (as it were) subscribe to their owne guiltinesse of death and damnation. In using circumcision, they made knowne they had originall sinne, and were guilty of it. Their manifold washings did shew they were exceedingly filthy in the sight of God, and so guilty of the curse of the Law, and so did their sacrifices.

Thus then conceive we these words, as if the Apostle had said, And having perfectly blotted out the law of ceremonies, which in the use of it did convince the Iewes of sinne, and bind them over to death for sinne, and the whole morall Law (so farre forth as it did accuse) convince and condemne us of sinne.

Now from hence it is cleare, that Christ hath not only paid the debt of Gods chosen, and satisfied for their sins; but hee hath also cancelled the bond which did witnesse their guiltinesse of sinne, accuse them for sinne, and bind them over to the punishment of sinne.

The reason and ground of this is very plaine, namely this, Christ hath not onely paid every jot of the principall debt of Gods chosen, but hath also fully answered the forfeiture and penalty that did lie against them, for the breach of that bond of the Law of God, namely, the curse of the Law: for as the Apostle saith, Gal. 3. 13. *He was made even a curse for them*; therefore now the Law in regard of accusation, and the curse of it, is frustrate, and of no force, strength, nor vertue against them: it is cancelled, it is as if it had never been: we may safely conclude with the Apostle, against our adversaries the Papists: That Christ hath fully satisfied for the sins of Gods chosen.

We know it in common experience, that men use not to deliver up or cancel their bond: till the whole debt be paid, and they be fully satisfied: if but halfe the debt, or three quarters of it be paid, and not all, in such sort as the bond requireth,

Doct. 1.
Christ hath both paid the debt of Gods chosen, and also cancelled the bond, witnessing their guiltinesse.

Reason.

Use 1.
Gods chosen need not peece out Christ his satisfaction for their sins, by any thing they can doe or suffer, as the Papists teach.

reth, men still retaine the bond in full strength and vertue; but if the bond be delivered up or cancelled, that argues full contentment, and full satisfaction, so is it betweene God and his chosen. Christ their surety who undertooke the payment of their debt to God his Father, hath payd the debt, and cancelled the bond, and therefore hath fully satisfied for them: it is most absurd and grosse to thinke there is any thing unsatisfied, and any thing left for them to pay, the bond of their debt being cancelled, especially the bond being in the hands of God, who knowes whether any part of the debt be left unpaid; and is able to keepe the bond in his hands, if it be not fully satisfied: indeede if the bond had bene in mens hands, it might haply have bene gotten from them by violence or fraud; but the bond being in the hands of God, no such thing can be feared or suspected; therefore hee delivering the bond into Christ his hands, and suffering him to cancell it; it is a plaine, and an invincible evidence that he is fully satisfied for the finnes of his chosen, and they need not patch or piece out that satisfaction made by Christ, by any thing they can doe or suffer, as the Papists doe grossely imagine.

Againe, this Doctrine may serve exceeding much for the comfort of such as are in Christ; for why? is it so that Christ hath not onely satisfied for their sins, but cancelled the bond which did witnesse their guiltinesse? certainly then they may safely say with the Apostle, Rom. chap. 8. verf. 33. *Who shall lay any thing to our charge? who shall condemne us?* they are cleare and free in Law, the Law cannot charge them with any thing; yea, the Divell the accuser of the brethren, Revel. 12. 10. *is cast downe* and put to silence, and can lay nothing justly against them: yea (which is the greatest comfort of all) God himselfe can bring no action against them, their surety Christ Jesus hath paid their debt, and forfeited, and cancelled the bond, wherein they stood bound to God, they are acquitted before the Judgement-seat of God, even in the high Court of Heaven; therefore it is not possible they should be any where condemned, unlesse we say there is some greater than God; or an higher Court of Justice than the Judgement-seat of God, which were folly and blasphemy once to thinke: how then, shall not this affect the hearts of Gods chosen, and fill them with comfort and joy unspeakable? men commonly doe applaud and please themselves, and finde great contentment in this, when they can truly say they owe no man a groat, and they are out of debt; how much more may such as are in Christ finde sweetnesse and comfort in this, that they are out of Gods debt? not in regard of duty, thankfulness and obedience; but in regard of his curse and judgements, they now are no more bound over, and lyable to the curse of the Law; let as many as truly belong unto Christ, meditate and thinke on it for their comfort.

Such as be in Christ are so discharged from their finnes, as that none can lay any thing to their charge.

That I will handle in the next place, shall be that which is offered from the word *hand-writing*. In that the Law is called an hand-writing, an obligation or bond, and that against us: we are taught thus much.

That the morall Law is not onely a bond of obedience, but also a bond of conviction, a bond, convincing, accusing and condemning for sinne, and binding to the curse for the breach and transgression of it, unlesse there be a freedome from it by Christ; as it is in penall statutes by the common-wealth, men are not onely bound to the obedience of them, but to the penalty for the breach of them; so is it with us in respect of the Law of God, we are not only bound to obey it, but to the penalty of it; if we disobey it and breake it, it is the condition annexed to the Law, plainly propounded in the Word of God: *doe this and live, do it not, and die the death*; breake it and thou art accursed, thou art bound to the curse, which is the penalty of the Law: for *curst is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the Booke of the Law to doe them*: it is a cleare point, and stands with the tenour of the justice of God, that the

E e

breach

Doct. 2.

The morall Law not only bindes to the obedience of it, but to the curse also for the transgression of it, unlesse there be a freedome from it by Christ.

Vse. 1.
The miserable
condition of
such as be our
of Christ.

The remem-
brance of sin
hath been ve-
ry troublesome
to the godly at
some times.

Vse 2.
The Law ought
to be our
schoolmaster
to bring us to
Christ.

breach of the Law should binde men over to his curse, unlesse there be deli-
verance from it by Christ.

See then the miserable condition of such as are out of Christ, as all are who
live in their finnes, and will not be reformed: they are bound by the Law to the
curse of God, that is, to perpetuall woe and misery, both in the time of this life,
in the end of this life, and after it is ended, even to Gods bitter wrath in the
lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever. Oh that men who live in
their finnes, would thinke on this as they ought: if they see not themselves
thus miserable in regard of the curse, even therein is the curse already upon
them in blindnesse of minde, and hardnesse of heart; if they see and know
their finnes, as they cannot but see and know them, who have beene often con-
vinced of them; as their drunkennesse, swearing, malicious dealing, covetous-
nesse, usury, seeking to Wizards, Sabbath-breaking, and the like; if men see
these finnes, and their owne consciences tell them, they deserve the eternall
wrath of God for them: let them then consider thus much and remember it,
that they are bound over to the curse of the Law by a double, yea, by a three-
fold bond they are bound: by the bond of the Law, by the bond of the Gos-
pell, and by the bond of their owne conscience to death and damnation. And
that this may be thought on with profit, let us consider what a trouble the
remembrance of sinne hath beene to the godly at some times. *Iob* said, *God was
bitter things against him, and made him to possesse the iniquities of his youth,*
Iob 13. 20. Psalm. 38. 3. David said, hee had no rest in his bones because of his
sinne: and verse 8. that hee roared for the very griefe of his heart. If the memory
of sinne be such a trouble to the godly, Oh, what a racke will it be one day to
him that hath it in full force against him; hee that besides the bond of the Law,
the bond of the Gospell, hath the bond of his owne conscience binding him
over to death and damnation? surely when the Lord shall let loose the cord of
his conscience; who is out of Christ, though it be in the midst of his jollity,
hee shall finde it will be as the hand-writing that *Belsazzar* saw, *Dan. 5. 6.*
it will change the copy of his countenance, loose his joynts, and his sinnes
will smite one against the other; yea, hee shall feelee the flames of hell fire
flashing up in his soule and conscience: thinke on this all you that now please
your selves in a course of sinne.

Come wee to a second use. Is it so that the Law is a bond binding over to the
curse for the breach of it, unlesse there be freedome from it by Christ? then let
the Law be as the Apostle calls it, *Gal. 3. 24. our school-master to bring us to*
Christ: let the whipping and terrours of the Law drive us from it selfe, to the
throne of grace and mercy; and for encouragement, know we that the end of
conviction by the Law is, that *the promise of mercy may be given to them that be-
lieve,* as the Apostle hath taught us, *Gal. 3. 22. The Law concludes all under sinne,*
that the promise by the faith of Iesus Christ should be given to them that believe.
Know then that the terrours of the Law threatening the curse and perdition, must
be a preparative to salvation, it must drive us from the Law to Christ, that hee
may be our Saviour. When therefore the Law doth convince and accuse thee of
sinne, arraigne thee at the barre of Gods Judgement, and fill thy soule with ter-
ror, appeale from it, and goe to Christ, and believe in him, and that with such
a faith as is joynd with hope, love, and new obedience; and the promise of
pardon and life everlasting shall certainly be given to thee.

The next thing that by order of the words wee are led to consider, is the
word [*Ordinances*] and therein to shew the abrogation of the Law of Cer-
emonies: but wee shall more fitly handle that, verse 17. The next thing I will
handle, shall be that, which the words following doe offer to our consideration,
[*That was against us, or which was contrary to us*] I take those words together,
because the latter are but an expressing of the former in other termes, and all
one

one in effect: the meaning I shewed to be this, so farre forth as the Law did convince of sinne, and as a bond bindes over to the punishment of sinne.

Hence then it is cleare, that Christ hath removed and taken away the morall Law of God, from the chosen of God, and freed them from it, not in regard of obedience, or as the rule of obedience, and the duties of love both to God and men, but in regard of the rigour and curse of it: as it is a rule of good life, it is perpetuall, it continues for ever, and admits no abrogation. Our Saviour Christ saith, Math. chap. 5. verf. 17. *Here came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it.* And the Apostle, Rom. chap. 7. verf. 12. *Do we make the Law of no effect through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the Law;* the Law then as it is a rule of good duties both to God and men, it unchangeable, not abrogated by Christ, but in the rigour of it, requiring of us in this life exact and perfect obedience, and that personall, that a man in his owne person fulfill it, and for manner and manner doe perfectly all things contained in it, and in the threatening, inexorable severity, and curse of it, as it doth either convince of sinne for the least breach of it, or as it bindeth to the curse, for the transgression of it; so it is against us, and contrary to us, and so it is taken away and removed by Christ. The Apostle saith, Rom. 6. 14. *You are not under the Law, as many as belong to Christ are not under the Law,* that is, under the rigour of the Law. God doth not examine their obedience according to the strict rule of the Law, but is pleased (through his grace in Christ) to accept their sinners, though imperfect obedience, Gal. 3. 12. It is most plaine, that Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, when he was made a curse for us: for it is written, *Cursed is every one that hangs in a tree:* and Gal. 4. 4. 5. *That hee became subject to the Law, that he might redeem them which were under the Law; that is, them that were under the yoke and bondage of the Law, and especially under the curse of it, that hee might redeem them from under the bondage and curse of the Law: it is thus a cleare point, that Christ hath freed Gods chosen from the rigour and curse of the morall Law of God.*

Come wee to the use of it: and first this doctrine may discover unto us the vaine shift and pernicious illusion of many in the world, who to justify and maintaine their loosenesse of life, and easie contempt of the Will of God, and to exempt themselves from all bodily obedience, like not to charge the Lawes and Commandments of God with too much rigour, and say with strictnesse, yea, they dare say, in plaine termes, the Preacher of the Word in urging good duties upon them, lay too much upon them, and doe too much restrain them of their pleasures and profits, of liberty in speeches, and freedoms in apparell, and such like. To give instance in some particulars: will not the drunkard and sensual person say, hee must follow his pleasures, and take his delight among his companions? abridge him of that, and take away his life. Will not the proud person, man or woman, say, they must needs follow the fashion; they must be like others, or else be counted no body in the world? And what is the plea of covetous persons that will be rich, howsoever they get it? Forsooth we must use what means we can for our estate, and make the most of our owne: And what say sweet and blasphemous? Oh, we cannot alwaies avoid an oath, it is but a small matter now and then to swear out an oath, and to swear a little. And generally what say all loose, livent, and profane persons? but this: the Preachers would have us become Saints on earth, but it will not be, our nature cannot like of such strictnesse. Now what is this (I beseech you) but as if they should say, the Law of God, the rule of holy and good life is too righteous, and too intolerable, and we cannot endure it: yea, what is this but a plaine evidence that they belong not to Christ, for there is no rigour in the law to them that are in Christ. If then we hold the Law too rigorous and strict, we

Doff. 3.

Christ hath taken away the rigour and curse of the morall Law from Gods chosen.

Vse 1.

Discovery of the vaine shift used by many to maintaine their loosenesse of life.

make an argument against our selves, we conclude our selves, not to belong to Christ, and of our owne mouths, will the Lord one day iudge us. Thinke on it all you (whosoever you be) that are ever carping and cavelling, and excepting against some thing in each commandment of God as too hard, too strict, and too rigorous.

And now to speake something on the other side, for the comfort and encouragement of such as are in Christ, and endeavour to obey the Will of God in all things, without any reasoning, and without disputing against it.

Let them know for their comfort, that though they performe not good duties perfectly, yet their practice of them faithfully is pleasing to God, though they cast not off all evill fully, as they desire; yet true resistance of it with hatred, is accepted of the Lord. Though they have so many infirmities as doe make them often to sinne, and to come short of perfection in their best actions, yet the Lord will not examine their actions according to the strict rule of his Law. They are freed by Christ from the rigour of the Law, and their imperfect obedience to the Law is died in the blood of Christ, and so made, not (as the Papists teach) meritorious, but pleasing to God: their failings beside their purpose shall never be laid to their charge; the Lord will accept their will, and sincere affection to obey him in all things, as obedience acceptable to him, for that is the worke of God in them, he workes that affection in them. And know it for a certaine truth, God will approve thee for his owne worke found in thee, and not reject thee for thine: hee hath wrought in thee a will to obey him, he will not cast thee off because of thy weaknesse, but will accept thy will to obey, for obedience it selfe, and will spare thee in regard of thy weaknesse, as a man spareth his owne childe: they are the Lords owne words uttered by the mouth of his Prophet, Mal. 3. 17. A man seeing the willingnesse of his childe to doe that he bids him, though not able to doe it, is content to accept it as the deed it selfe: so doth God deale with his children; which may be an excellent comfort and encouragement to all that are in Christ, to goe on in walking humbly before the Lord, and endeavouring to keepe faith and a good conscience.

Again, is it so that Christ hath freed Gods chosen from the curse of the Law? then let as many as truly believe in Christ, learne not to feare any evill over much; as reviling, cursings of ill tongues, witch-craft, plague, pestilence, famine, sword, or death it selfe, for why? the curse which makes all these and other like things hurtfull, is removed from them that are in Christ. Therefore let not them feare these things before they come, nor be discouraged when they fall upon them. We read, Heb. 11. 36, 37, 38. that such as were renowned for their faith in Christ, and through faith obtained a good report, were tryed by mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover by bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were hewne asunder, and had their bones broken, &c. Let us then be strengthened by this cloud of witnesses, as the holy Ghost calls it, Heb. 12. 1.

First, against feare of any evill that may befall us, although it be so, that we be taken away through want of food in time of dearth, or by plague or pestilence, or by any other meanes; yet remember this, if wee be in Christ, the vaine and sting of these things is removed from us, and they fall not upon us as a curse. Indeed if wee be out of Christ, these things are but *preludis*, forerunners of further woe and misery. Such as live in their finnes, and are out of Christ, their condition is fearefull: let them know to their terrour, that as they that are in Christ have no Law written against them, the hand-writing that was against them is blotted out, and cancelled; so they that be out of Christ, have the Law in full force and strength against them, they are subject to the rigour of the Law: yea which is more, they have no Gospell written for them; for the comforts and sweet promises of the Gospell belong to none but to them that are in Christ: the Gospell in it selfe, which is the sweet covenant of grace, to them that

Use 2. mon.
Comfort to
such as are in
Christ, their
faithfull pra-
ctice of good
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it be unper-
fect, yet it is
pleasing to
God.

Use 3.
Such as truly
ly believe in
Christ, must
learne not to
feare any evill
over much.

Note.

that are out of Christ, is a word of bitterness, a word of terror, and further increase of judgement, because they believe it not, and the seals of that covenant (the Sacraments received by them) become seals of their judgement and damnation, 1 Cor. 11. 29. In being partakers of them, they eat and drinke judgement, and the curse of God to themselves, and there is but a step betwene them and hell, and there is no other difference betwene them, and those that now lie frying in hell fire: but this, that they are past recovery, and these (in the great patience and long suffering of God) are suffered yet for a time, (how long or short none knowes but the Lord) to see if they will accept of life and salvation offered them, which is a thing to be thought on with trembling; yea, such a thing as may move the most wicked and profane person, man or woman in the world (if the Divell have not taken full possession of their soules) to bethinke themselves of speedy reformation.

Come we to the degrees by which the Apostle setteth downe the cancelling of the hand-writing that was against us. 1. Hee saith, Christ hath put it out. 2. Hee addes further, hee hath taken it out of the way. And not content with that, hee goeth a step higher: 3. And saith, hee fastened it upon the Crosse.

Wee are in generall to marke the amplification of this point: the Apostle thought it not sufficient to say, wee have grace and full remission of all our finnes, but subjoynes to that, That the bill or bond which doth convince us of same, and binde us over to the punishment, is blotted out.

Yes, but might some say, though it be blotted out, yet some controversie may arise betwene the creditor and the debtor about it.

The Apostle prevents this, and saith, Christ hath ever taken away the matter of difference.

Yea, but might some say, what if it be but kept hid in some place for a time?

This also the Apostle meets withall, and saith, wee need not doubt any such matter; for Christ hath fastened it on the Crosse, and torne it in pieces with the nailes of the Crosse. Hence we may easily gather this generall conclusion: That the Word of God is able to resolve us in all difficulties, and to answer all occurring doubts of the flesh whatsoever. But I will hold to the particulars here intended by the Apostle.

Hence it followeth necessarily, If wee truly believe in Christ wee are to be fully resolved of the pardon of all our finnes, and not to doubt of it: we must be fully perswaded of the truth of the whole Word of God, but especially of those things (be they threatnings or promises) which the Spirit of God hath much beaten upon, and urged with much amplification.

Hath the holy Ghost beene carefull to take away all scruple, and to answer all doubts against full satisfaction for the finnes of Gods chosen, and assurance of the pardon of them, to them that are in Christ, and shall wee (believing Christ) make doubt of it?

Surely it must needs be a Satanicall spirit, that shall contradict the Spirit of God, in so plaine and plentifull evidence of truth: and indeed, it is the Spirit of Antichrist that doth gain-say it. The Papists teach, we can have no assurance by faith that our sins are forgiven us; and one of their cavelling objections is this:

Wee are to pray for the pardon of our finnes every day, and to say, *forgive us our trespasses*: therefore wee cannot be assured of the pardon of them; if wee could, then wee need not pray for it.

It is a needlesse thing (say they) to pray for that wee are already sure of: as to pray that God would make his Sonne to be incarnate, or the like.

I answer, indeed, if wee had such assurance of the pardon of sin, as were void of all doubting, it were needlesse to pray for it: but our assurance in this life is mingled with some doubting; with the greatest measure of assurance, there is

7. 3. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000.

Doct. 4.
True believers
are to be fully
resolved of the
pardon of all
their finnes.

Vs.
It is the spirit
of Antichrist
that teacheth
that true be-
lievers can-
not be assured
by faith of the
pardon of their
finnes.

Answer.
Objection.

some doubting through our corruption. Therefore it is not needlesse, notwithstanding our assurance, to pray daily for the pardon of our finnes: they may stand together, and it remaines as a truth that we may have assurance by faith of the pardon of our finnes: yea, the Lord would have his children so sure of the pardon of their finnes, wherof he gives them a dislike and true abhorring, as he would have it an article of their faith, and hath given his Sacraments to seal up to them that assurance.

One thing more observe wee, from these degrees by which the Apostle sets downe the cancelling of that hand-writing that was against us, we are to marke that the Apostle joynes these three things together. 1. Blotting out that hand-writing. 2. Taking it out of the way: 3. Fastening it to the Crosse: as indeed signifying one and the same thing in substance, namely this:

That Christ hath removed from the chosen of God the rigour and curse of the Law: so as now it hath no power over them, and shall never hurt them. And this is amplified by the Apostle in regard of our weaknesse with this variety of phrase, that Christ hath blotted out the hand-writing, taking it away, fastened it to the Crosse, ascending thus by degrees, but meaning one and the thing; this is to be observed to this purpose.

It may teach us that the phrase and formes of speech used in Scripture, of blotting out finnes, taking them away like a cloud or mist, drowning them in the bottome of the sea, not imputing them, hiding and covering them, and the like, all of them come to this meaning, that sinne is quite taken away, and shall never hurt them that have it blotted out, covered, or not imputed unto them.

It is all one with this, that their finnes are fastened and nailed to the Crosse, for wee see the Apostle joynes these together, blotting out, taking away, and fastening to the Crosse, as all comming to one purpose. Wicked therefore and most injuriously deale the Papists with us, in charging us to make a justified man, but as a whited tombe, faire without, and soule within, and why so? Forsooth, because wee teach (according to the phrase of the Scripture) that a man justified, hath his finnes covered, and not imputed unto him, but the meric of Christ his death imputed for the pardon of them. This (saith the Papists) is to make a justified man like a sepulchre, whited without with an imputed justice; but within, full of iniquity and disorder: a meere shift and cavelling slander, for to have a sinne hid and covered (as wee see) according to the phrase of Scripture, is not (as they grossely imagine) to have it cloaked, or (as it were) varnished over with a faire colour, it still remaining under that colour; no, no, it is to have it quite removed, and taken away in the punishment of it; for indeed nothing can be hid from Gods sight: when therefore sinne is said to be hid or covered in respect of God, the meaning must needs be, it is quite taken away, it is as if it had never beene: and let not the Papists, by any cavell they can devise, drive us from this truth, and from the comfort of it, which is this: If the Lord impute not sinne, we are to know, he will never punish it; if he remember it not, certainly he will never revenge it: if he cover our sins, without question hee will never call them to iudgement; they are taken out of the way and fastened to the Crosse, and shall never be laid to our charge.

Come we now to the very last words of this Verse, wherein (as I said) is implied the meanes by which Christ cancelled the hand-writing that was against us, namely, *his Crosse*. By the Crosse wee are to understand Christ his suffering death upon the Crosse; that Christ by dying on the Crosse, did by that his death blot out, take away, and cancell the hand-writing that was against us, the very same nailes that were driven into his hands and feete, were by him driven thorow that hand-writing. The meaning is in a word, that the very death that Christ dyed on the Crosse, was an utter abolishing and taking away of the hand-writing that was against the chosen of God.

Dott. 5.
The phrases and formes of speech used in Scripture, of blotting out finnes, of taking them away like a cloud, and the like, signifie thus much, that sinne is quite taken away and shall never hurt them that be in Christ.

Vse.
Removall of a wicked slander which the Papists cast upon us.

Note.

Interpretation
The phrase *his Crosse* signifies Christ his suffering death upon the Crosse, by which he cancelled the hand-writing that was against us.

We

We are here first to marke, that the Apostle doth ascribe the removall, and the taking away of the hand-writing that was against us, not to the life of Christ, but to his death; not to his active obedience, but to his passive, to his suffering death on the crosse. Hence wee may conclude and easily gather.

That Christ his active obedience, the obedience of his life, did not purchase and procure the taking away of the finnes of Gods chosen, and of the curse due to them for their finnes, but his passive obedience, his death and suffering. Though Christ his active obedience was most exact and perfect, and hee in his life fulfilled the whole Law of God perfectly, yet was not that perfect, legall, and meritorious obedience of his, sufficient to procure remission of finnes, and freedome from the curse of the Law: hee must over and besides that, suffer death, even the cursed death of the Crosse, and beare in his body and soule the extremity of Gods wrath, before he could satisfie Gods iustice for the finnes of his chosen: and therefore it is said, *Iſa. 53. 5. That hee was wounded for our transgressions, and broken for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.* And the Apostle, *1 Pet. 2. 24. saith, Hee bare our finnes in his body on the tree.*

Doftrine 6.
Christ his active obedience did not purchase the taking away of the guilt and punishment due to Gods chosen for their finnes, but his passive obedience.

I may safely say, and deliver it as a certaine truth, wee shall not finde in any place of the Scripture, that remission of finnes, and removall of the curse is ascribed to the active obedience of Christ, but is ever attributed to his death, and to his passion. See then the intolerable pride of the Papists, who dare challenge remission of finnes, for some thing done by themselves; yea, for some things done by themselves, for which they have no warrant in the Word of God, but meerely devised by themselves: as their Pilgrimages, wilfull poverty, vow of single life, and the like: they dare challenge pardon of finnes for these things, and stand upon it, that they purchase and procure remission of finnes by them. Oh, the height of pride in these men! Jesus Christ the righteous did not purchase remission of sinne by his perfect fulfilling of the Law in his life, and yet the proud Papist dare challenge it for his will-worship, and devised obedience, which indeed is most hatefull, and a most abominable pride and presumption.

Use.
Discovery of the monstrous pride of the Papists challenging remission of sinne, for something done by themselves.

The next thing that is offered to our consideration, from this word (*Crosse*) is, that which the Apostle thereby intends (namely) this: That Christ his death, his suffering and shedding of his blood on the Crosse, is the onely meanes and meritorious cause of removing the rigour and curse of the Law from Gods chosen: only by the death of Christ on the Crosse is the hand-writing blotted out, and quite removed, and taken away from the chosen of God, for why?

Doftr. 7.
Onely by the death of Christ upon the crosse, was the rigour and curse of the Law removed from Gods chosen.

Christ on the Crosse stood in stead of Gods chosen, he was their surety, *Heb. 7. 22.* And when hee stood on the Crosse, then onely hee under-went the curse for them; the Apostle shewes it most plaine, *Gal. 3. 13. he saith, Christ redeemed them from the curse: (But when?) Even then, saith the Apostle, when he was made a curse for them: And when was that? Surely then, when hee hung on the Crosse; for it followeth in the prooffe of the Apostle, in the words following; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. Hee redeemed them from the curse, even then, when he was made a curse for them, and that was when hee hung on the Crosse, which is a most plaine and pregnant prooffe of this point, that onely by the death of Christ on the Crosse, the rigour and curse of the Law was removed from Gods chosen.*

How then was it removed from them that lived before the death of Christ?

I answer; even by the death of Christ to come, his death was effectuell to take away the curse from all Gods chosen before the death of Christ, as it was when he hung on the Crosse, for he was *the Lambe slain from the beginning of the world, Revel. 13. 8.*

First then, hence we learne, whither we are to goe to be freed from the curse,

Objection.
Answer.

Use. I.
We must goe

to the Crosse
of Iesus Christ,
if we will finde
deliverance
from the curse
and from the
venome and
sting of any
trouble or
calamity.

Vse 2.
If wee looke
for freedome
from the curse
of the law, it
must be by
faith in the
death of
Christ.

Speciall direc-
tions in this
point.

whither to goe to finde deliverance from the venome and sting of any trouble or calamity that shall fall upon us, namely, to the Crosse of Iesus Christ; when thou art sicke, or cast into any trouble whatsoever, if thou desire to have the bitterness and curse of that trouble removed, then seeke thou to the Crosse of Iesus Christ.

Object. How it that to be done, may some say?

Answer. I answer, the first thing thou doest in time of thy distresse, let it be this, even an earnest suite put up to God for the pardon of thy sinnes, in the blood of Iesus Christ: seeke to the Crosse of Christ for the remission of thy sinnes, and especially for that sinne thou thinkest is the cause of thy trouble; and never rest seeking and suing to the Lord, till it please him to give thee some assurance of the pardon of thy sinnes, and then thou shalt be sure, though thy trouble be still continued on thee, yet the venome and bitterness of that trouble is removed from thee, and it shall not hurt thee; and without this thou shalt finde no comfort in the time of thy trouble, and though thou beest delivered from it, yet will it be but in judgement, not in mercy; as it was with Pharaoh, so shall it be with thee: one trouble shall follow in the necke of another, till thou be destroyed. Learne then (in time of thy distresse) to goe to the Crosse of Iesus Christ for ease and comfort; and then thou shalt be sure, (whether it be continuance of that distresse, or deliverance from it) it will be in mercy and not in judgement.

Againe, is it so, that only by the death of Christ on the Crosse, the rigour and curse of the Law is removed and taken away? then let us know, that if wee looke for freedome from the curse of the Law, it must be by faith in the death of Christ, even by faith in Christ crucified onely: by the death of Christ on the Crosse is the curse of the Law removed: so farre forth then as wee have part in his death by faith, so farre wee are freed from the curse of the Law, and that wee deceive not our selves in this point; (for herein every one will flatter and sooth up himselfe, and thinke that hee hath faith in the blood of Christ, and presume to come to the Sacrament, wherein faith is especially directed to the passion of Christ.

That we therefore deceive not our selves, know it for a truth, we can never have faith in the blood of Christ, unlesse we be further enlightened than nature can afford, and be made to see the sinnes of our hearts and lives; yea, to see our particular sinnes. The vilest wretch that lives can generally say, he is a sinner; but our sight of sinne must be speciall: we must see our particular sinnes, and we must see them together with the curse and judgement of God attending upon them, that we may be humbled for them, and finde our selves stand in need of the blood of Christ for the pardon of them. Many mens consciences can tell them of their particular sinnes, and yet they are not humbled for them: what is the cause? Surely because they see them not together with the curse of God due unto them, they blesse themselves in their hearts, and say, *we shall have peace, although wee walke according to the stubbornesse of our owne hearts, thus adding drunkennesse to thirst*, as it is, Deut. 29. 19. Men naturally say in their hearts, the curses of the Law are foolishnesse, and deride the judgements threatened against them for their sinnes, with the wicked which say, *Isa. 5. 19. Let him make speed, let him hasten his worke that wee may see it, and let the counsell of the holy one of Israel draw neere and come, that wee may know it.*

Labour then to see thy particular sinnes, and to see them together with the curse due unto them, that so thou maist be humbled, and finde thy selfe stand in need of the blood of Christ: this is the way to prepare thy heart for the worke of faith; and if thy heart be thus prepared and humbled, no doubt the Lord will worke faith in thee, to apprehend the merit of Christ his death for the pardon of thy sinnes, and thou shalt be freed from the curse of the Law, and then thou
comming

comming to the Sacrament shall (to thy comfort) find thy faith in the blood of Christ strengthened and confirmed; and the Sacrament shall be to thee a seale of that righteousness that is by faith in Christ Jesus.

Verf. 15. *And hath spoiled the principalities and powers, and hath made a shew of them openly; and hath triumphed over them in the same Crosse.*

IN this verse is a further amplification of the effect of Christ his death on the Crosse, spoken of in the verse before, and that by a comparison of the greater to the lesse, on this manner: Christ by his death on the Crosse hath not onely cancelled the hand-writing that was against us, and taken that out of the way, and fastened it upon his Crosse: but by the same death hath vanquished the divell, and the powers of hell, and triumphed over them. Wherein is also a prevention of a secret objection touching the ignominy of the Crosse: for some might haply thinke, in that Christ was brought to that ignominious and cursed death of the Crosse, that the devills had a great hand over him. This the Apostle prevents, setting against it Christ his victory and triumph on the Crosse, that thereby he foiled them, and gave them their utter overthrow, and had a full, absolute, and glorious victory, and conquest over them; that is the dependence of this verse on the former, and the summe of it.

Now this victory and triumph is in this verse, set out by things Christ did on the Crosse.

First, that hee spoiled his and our enemies, the devills, which are here (by way of amplification of Christ his might and power in prevailing over them) said to be *Principalities and powers*.

Secondly, that he made an open shew of them.

Thirdly, that he triumphed over them. And all these things are spoken by way of similitude or allusion to the manner of the Heathen triumphs: That as in Heathen triumphs among the Romanes, and others, the chiefe generalls and leaders being overcome and taken captives and prisoners, had their armour taken from them, their hands bound behind them, and made (to their publike shame) to follow, or goe before the conquerour, mounted on his most glorious and triumphing Chariot.

Even thus Christ tooke all the divells in hell prisoners, disarmed them, and led them in triumph like slaves, with their hands (as it were) bound behind them: mounted on the Crosse, as on a royall Chariot triumphing over them.

That is the generall meaning of the Apostle in the words of this verse.

Come we to the handling of them more particularly, on the same order they are laid downe by the Apostle.

As first, that Christ spoiled the principalities and powers; the word translated [*spoiled*] doth properly signifie stripped, or made naked; and being here applied to enemies overcome by Christ, it signifieth, that hee disarmed them, puld off their armour, tooke from them all their weapons, and left them naked and spoiled of all power to hurt.

The principalities and powers.] To passe by all curious speculations touching these words, wee are to understand by them, the divell and his angells, who are said to be principalities and powers, because of their power which they exercise over the wicked. In which respect they are said to be, Ephes. chap. 6. vers. 12. *Worldly governors, the princes of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places, blinding the mindes, and hardening the hearts of the wicked.* Thus then conceive we these words: as if the Apostle had said, And hath disarmed the Divell and his angells, who are mighty and powerfull in the children of disobedience, and hath taken from them their weapons, and left them (as it were) naked, and void of all meanes to doe hurt.

First,

Interpreta-
tion.

First observe wee here in generall the Apostles amplification of the effect of Christ his death on the crosse: he saith that Christ, by his death hath not onely cancelled the hand-writing that was against us, but (which is more) hath vanquished the divell and his angells. Thus the Apostle goes on from the lesser to the greater, and from the greater concludes the lesser.

That Christ having spoiled the principalities and powers, hath certainly cancelled the hand-writing of ordinances, &c.

Hence wee may gather thus much; That it is a good argument and sound kinde of reasoning to reason from the victory over sinne and Satan, to the removall and taking away of the curse. If any man finde the power of Satan vanquished in himselfe, he may thence certainly conclude the removall of the curse from him, and the pardon of his finnes.

It is the Apostles manner of reasoning in this place, and as David said, Psal. 41. 11. *by this I know that thou favourest mee, because mine enemy doth not triumph over mee.* So without question may a man that findes that the Divell the enemy of his soule doth not tyrannize over him, nor exercise his power in him carrying his heart after sinne, but his power is weakened, and his dominion overcome in him: that man may safely say: By this I know my finnes are forgiven, and I am in Gods favour.

When therefore thou findest that Satans dominion is impaired in thee, and that he cannot prevaile with thee to make thee fall into presumptuous finnes, but thou hast strength of faith to repell and quench his fiery darts (that is) sudden, strong and dangerous temptations: make thy advantage of it, and fly to the comfort of thine owne soule. Certainly I am free from the curse of the law, and my finnes are forgiven.

Come wee to a more speciall consideration of the words, and first consider we the word (*spoiled*) the Apostle saith, Christ hath spoiled the principalities and powers, that is, as wee have heard before, hath stripped or disarmed them, and left them naked and spoiled of all power to doe harme. By the manner of speaking we are given to understand thus much.

That Christ by his death hath taken from the Divell and his angells, their power they had against Gods chosen: by his death he hath stripped them, and left them as it were naked creatures, not able to doe the least hurt to Gods chosen: so much is tendred to us under the word (*spoiled*) and wee are to consider it; and that we mistake it not, but may rightly conceive this doctrine, we must consider what power the Divell had against Gods chosen before the death of Christ, and how that power is taken away by Christ his death. For the understanding of this know we, that all descending of Adam and Eve by naturall generation are guilty of their first sione, and borne uncleane sinners, and the justice of God is such, that where there is guiltinesse of sinne there is damnation due: all then being guilty of sinne deserving damnation, the Divell hee stands before God day and night, requiring even by the justice of God that all should be damned in hell for ever. Herein then stands the power of the Divell against Gods chosen: he had power to accuse them in regard of their guiltinesse of sin, and had power under a certaine right of Gods justice (for the Lord cannot deny justice and right because hee cannot deny himselfe) to require their damnation: this power the Divell had against Gods chosen before the death of Christ, now this power is taken away by Christ his death on this manner.

The Lord Iesus took all the finnes and guiltinesse of Gods chosen upon him, and did beare them in his body on the tree: hee suffered all the wrath and torments due for the same, and so with his owne precious blood washed them and made them cleane from all guilt, and they being washed and made cleane from guiltinesse and sinne, all the Divells power to accuse, and require sentence of condemnation against them is taken away.

Doftr. 1.
Such as finde the power of Satan vanquished in themselves may thence certainly conclude that the curse of the law is removed from them and that their sins are pardoned.

Use.
Comfort to such as finde Satans power weakened in themselves.

Doftr. 2.
The divell and his angells are stripped of all their power against Gods chosen by the death of Christ. What power the divell had against Gods chosen before the death of Christ.

How the divells power against Gods chosen is taken away.

Thus

Thus wee are especially to understand this Doctrine : That Christ by his death hath taken from the Divell and his angels their power to hurt Gods chosen. And this is chiefly intended by the Apostle in this, when he saith, Christ hath spoiled the Divell and his angels : but withall we are further to understand that Christ by his death hath taken away the Divells power to hurt Gods chosen either by tentation, or persecution, howsoever he is still suffered to tempt them, and to persecute them with cruell torments, because the Lord in his infinite wisdom will not have Christ his power in this respect to shew it selfe forth at once, but by degrees, and in some measure for the time, and then perfectly to take effect when all the dead shall be raised, and Christ have all his enemies made his footstool, 1 Cor. 15. 25. albeit I say the Divell be suffered to tempt and persecute Gods chosen, yet his power to hurt them in regard of their salvation, and of their right and title to eternall life and blessed estate in heaven is taken away, he cannot by any tentation or persecution plucke out of Christ his hands, so much as one soule of Gods chosen.

Thus then conceive wee this Doctrine : That Christ by his death hath taken from the Divell and his angels their power to accuse, and require the sentence of condemnation against Gods chosen; yea, their power to hurt any of Gods chosen either by tentation or persecution, in regard of right and title, and certaine hope of life and salvation, is taken away.

That is the Doctrine, and to manifest this to be a truth, consider wee these places of Scripture; Gen. 3. 15. we have it in the promise and promulgation of the Gospell by God himselfe, that the seed of the woman (that is) Christ should give him a deadly blow, breake his power and strength, so as hee should never be able to recover it; and that he should only bruise the heele of Christ (that is) onely touch and try some weake members of Christ by many tentations, but not be able to hurt them, Heb. 2. 14. We are taught, that this promise was accomplished by the death of Christ, and that Christ through death, destroyed him that had the power of death (that is) the Divell, and delivered them which for feare of death were all their life time subject to bondage, Revel. 12. 10. 11. after the battell betweene Michael and the great Dragon (that is) betweene Christ and the Divell, Christ overcoming, Iohn saith, I heard a loud voice, saying, Now is salvation in Heaven, and strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night: But they overcame him by the blood of the Lambe, and by the word of their testimony, Ioh. 12. 31. our Saviour saith, Now shall the Prince of this world be cast out; and presently he subjoynes, And I, if I were left up from the earth, will draw all men unto mee: signifying, that by his lifting up on the crosse, the Prince of this world (that is, the Divell) should be cast out. These are plaine evidences and proofes of this point: that Christ by his death hath spoiled the Divell and his angels, and taken from them their power against Gods chosen to hurt them.

First, this serves notably for the comfort of them, that truly believe in Christ, and let none but such take hold of it; let not such as are of the Divell (as Saint Iohn saith, 1 Epist. 3. 8. such as make a trade and common practice of sin) thinke to finde comfort in this Doctrine, they are not within the compasse of it, it belongs onely to the members of Christ, and let them know for their comfort, that Christ by his death hath spoiled the Divell and his angels of their power, so as now the Divell cannot accuse them of sinne, and they having to deale with the Divell (as at one time or other hee will be tempering with them) they must remember they have to deale with a naked creature, with an enemy indeed, but already overcome, they need doe no more, but as it were, set their fesse on his necke, as Ioshuah commanded his Captaines to set their feet on the necke of the Kings he had vanquished, Ioshuah 10. 24. though the Divell doe many waies tempt

Notes

Vse 1.

Comfort to the true members of Christ when they have to deale with the divell, they must remember they have to deale with an enemy already overcome.

tempt and try thee, thou being a member of Christ, yea, though hee lay siege to thy soule and conscience, to bring thee to dispaire, and the Lord suffer him for a time to carry a strong hand over thee for some good cause knowne to himselfe, even to fight against thee with the terrors of God, yet know it for a truth, hee shall never prevaile against thee to thy destruction, after a while the power of the Lord Jesus will shew it selfe, and in the end hee shall tread downe Satan under thy feete, as saith the Apostle, Rom. 16. 20. and that speech of the Apostle is worthy observation, hee saith not the God of peace the Lord Jesus shall tread Satan under his feete, but hee shall bring him under our feete, hee shall shortly make all that believe in him, to tread upon Satan, and to trample him under their feete: what an excellent comfort is this for all that truly believe in Christ? let them to their comfort meditate hereupon.

Vse 2.

The way to overcome the Divell, is by faith in the blood of Iesus Christ.

Again, is it so that Christ by his death hath spoiled Satan, stripped him of all his power? then learne we how we may be enabled to overcome the divell, it must be by faith in the blood of Iesus Christ: Christ hath overcome Satan by his death, and from thence wee must derive power to overcome him; if wee would be armed to fight and get victory over the Divell, it must be by faith in the death of Christ. And hence no doubt it is that men are easily foiled and doe soone yeeld to the least allurements and temptation of Satan, because they want faith in the blood of Christ. We shall heare a man sometimes say, Oh, I would leave my swearing, my drunkenesse, or put away my rash anger, or the like; but alas, I am such a weake and forgetfull creature, I cannot doe it. Dost thou (whosoever thou art) speake in good earnest? wouldest thou indeede leave thy sinne, and of weake be made strong to overcome it? learne then how thou maist be so, from the mouth of the holy Ghost, he hath taught thee, Heb. 11. 34. that by faith in Christ, of weake thou maist be made strong; they are the very words of the holy Ghost in that place. And Saint Paul (1 Epist. 3. 4.) saith, *this is our victory that overcome the world, even our faith*; by faith in Christ wee shall be able to overcome the world, yea, the Prince of this world the Divell, and to withstand his temptations.

Labour then to get faith in the death of Christ on the crosse, and thou shalt thence draw downe not onely comfort, but strength against sinne and Satan; and know it for a truth, though thou beest one of Gods chosen, and Christ hath by his death disarmed the Divell; yet to thee it is not effectuell, till thou come to have faith in his death; till then, the Divell hath power to tempt thee, and to overcome thee; therefore never rest till thou finde, that thou hast faith in the blood of Christ, and assurance that thy finnes are washed away in his blood, and then thou shalt be sure to finde strength against sinne, Satan, and all the enemies of thy salvation.

The error of the Sadduces convinced.

Doe 3.

Though the divell and his angels be stripped of their power against Gods chosen, yet they are still mighty and powerfull over the wicked.

The next thing hence offered to be considered, is from the word (*principallities and powers*) in that the Apostle calls the Divell and his Angells (*principallities and powers*) it is plaine they are not as some have thought, evil affections, and wicked thoughts, it was the error of the Sadduces, Act. 23. 8. they thought the Divells were nothing but evil affections, and wicked thoughts, but they are plainly convinced of error by this, and many other places of Scripture; that by the way. That which we are from these words to consider is this:

That notwithstanding Christ by his death hath spoiled the Divell and his angells, in regard of their power against Gods chosen, yet they are still mighty and powerfull over the wicked. The Divell is still a mighty Prince exercising his power and tyranny over the wicked, he holding up his scepter in their hearts, he still hath power to blind their mindes, and to harden their hearts, and to leade them into all kind of impiety and sinne, the Apostle saith, Ephes. 2. 2. *he is the Prince that ruleth in the aire, even the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*, even now since the coming of Christ in the flesh, yea, the Divell doth

doth exercise greater power and tyranny over the wicked, since the death of Christ, than he had before. Reuel. 18. 12. We finde in that song of victory, after Christ had vanquished the devill, there is a calling upon the heavens, and upon them that dwell in them, to rejoyce for the victory; and a woe proclaimed to the inhabitants of the earth, and why for

The reason is giuen, the diuell is come downe vnto them, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time. The meaning is, though Satan, before Christ overcame him by his death, was among the inhabitants of the earth, even such as have their portion in this life; yet now being overcome and stripped of his power against Gods Chosen, he comes downe more heavy, and in more tyrannous sort vpon them than before, and their woe is as it were doubled by Christ his victorie. Satan being now out of all hope to impaine and pull downe the situation of Gods chosen, he will wreak his ire upon the inhabitants of the earth, he will exercise his power over them to the full, and lead them deeper into all horrible sinne, and condemnation, and make them runne greedily vpon their owne destruction.

We are not therefore to maruell at it, that the diuell rageth more in these daies, and makes men now breake out into greater outrage of sinne than in former ages, he is now come downe among the inhabitants of the earth, in this latter age of the world, in more tyrannous manner, and the elder the world waxeth, the more the diuell rageth; and the more he rageth, the more his strength increaseth, for anger (being the whetstone of strength) sharpeneth it; therefore maruell not at it, that wicked men are now more shamelesse in sin, than in former times, rather let us marvell at this, that the Sunne that hath been a witness of so many foule sins (for men now shame not to sine in the open sunne-light, they declare their finnes at Sodome, they hid themselves in 17. 3. 9.) that the Sun (I say) shalles not downe from heauen, and that the earth opene not her mouth to swallow us up, and that the Lord Iesus come not downe in flaming fire, to burne both heauen and earth, and to give the wicked their portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone: wee may now hardly every daye looke for his coming, to make an end of these wretched and froward daies.

Again, it is so, that the devill, notwithstanding the death of Christ, doth still exercise his power over the wicked, and is his tyranny greater over them since the death of Christ than before: then let such as pride themselves now in this time of the Gospel, under the power of the Diuell, such as are now blind and ignorant, such as are now fencelesse and secure worldlings, such as now are giuen over to sensualitye and drunkenness, to pride, to whoredome, or any knowne sinne, let them consider in what a fearefull estate they are, their case is now worse than the case of Infidels, and of heathen men before the coming of Christ in regard of the diuels power over them: now his tyranny is doubled vpon them, and it is now harder to escape out of his hand, than it was before the death of Christ. Men commonly promise to themselves, now in the time of the Gospel, an easy escape out of their sinne, and a ready repentance when they will; yea, when they are most weake, even gasping for breath on their death bed: but alas, they deceive themselves, and therein doth the diuell shew his power over them, in possessing their hearts with such deceayting thoughts, know it for a truth, and consider it, wicked man or woman, whoeuer thou art: the devill is now more mad against thee, than if thou hadst lived before the coming of Christ, and therefore will not easily let thee slip out of his hand; and let it stirre thee up to use all meanes possible, and with speed to be deliuered out of his power, lest thou going on with hope of easy escape, the Lord in his iust iudgment, give thee up to hardnesse of heart, and in the end it be with thee, as it was with wicked *Abel*, and hard hearted *Pharaoh*, that

Ff

the

Vse 1.

It is no matter of wonder, that the devill rageth more in these dayes than in former times.

Vse 2.

Such as now finde themselves under the power of the devill, are in a most fearefull estate.

Vse 3.

Such as now finde themselves under the power of the devill, are in a most fearefull estate.

Interpretation.

Doct. 4.
Christ by his death on the crosse shamed the Devill.

Use. I.
The Devill cannot possibly shame any member of Christ.

the Lord in his justice offer thee some baite or other, to pull thee on, to thy destruction:

Come we to the next thing that Christ did on the Crosse: in these words (*and hath made a shew of them openly*) the word translated, *hath made a shew of them*, (for it is one word in the original) doth signifie thus much.

Hath made them a publike spectacle of scorne and derision, hee hath exposed them to shame and much disgrace, (*openly*), the word signifies (*boldly*), and the meaning is, publicly in the sight of many beholders, namely, in the sight of God, his heavenly Angels, and in the sight of all that looke on the death of Christ by faith. For indeed when Christ hung on the Crosse, hee was a spectacle of shame and contempt in the eyes of the world: all that looked on him with carnall eyes, mocked him, and had him in derision: but in the sight of God, his Angels, and all true beleevers, hee had glory, and the devill and his angels had shame. In the eyes of God, and of his Angels, and all true beleevers, was Christ his victory on the Crosse most manifest and glorious: though in the sight of the wicked, it was base and contemptible.

Thus then conceive wee these words, as if the Apostle had said, And hath made the Devill and his Angels a spectacle of shame and scorne, in the eyes of God, his Angels, and all that looke on the Crosse of Christ by faith.

Now hence it is cleare, that Christ by his death on the Crosse, hath shamed the Devill and his Angels. Christ his death on the Crosse was not onely the devils spoile, stripping him of his power, but it was his shame and confusion: for why? When our Saviour was on the crosse, the devils assaulted him most fiercely, and used all the strength they had to vex and torment him: and therefore in the Psalm 22. (wherein is figured under the person of David the passion of Christ) the devils are compared to dogges; to buls of Basan, (which rent his hands and his feet) to Lions, to Volcanes, in regard of their cruell usage of him. Now this they did to this end, that they might overcome our Saviour, and triumph over him: but all in vaine, he on the Crosse spoiled them, overcame them, led them captives, and triumphed over them. Herein then stood the shame of the devill by the crosse: that by it hee was disappointed of his hope and purpose against Christ, hee hoped he should have utterly destroyed him: but he was deceived and disappointed of his hope, yea, put out of all hope ever to prevail against him, and that was his shame. For as the Apostle saith, Rom. 8. 3. The hope of the godly makes them not ashamed; meaning that they cannot be disappointed of their hope, and so come to shame.

Whence we may gather on the contrary, that where hope faileth (especially in great matters undertaken) shame cometh upon it; and so the Devill being disappointed of his wished and most wicked purpose, in the death of Christ, was thereby shamed; yea, the death of Christ on the Crosse was his disappointment, and so was it his shame.

Is it so then, that Christ his death was the devils shame? did Christ on the Crosse defeat the devill of his mischievous purpose? did he then disappoint him, when the devill thought hee had him at most advantage, and in the very house of darknesse, when he was delivered into the hands of sinners? Mark 16. 7.

Then let this strengthen us in our faith in Christ at all times. Did Christ shame the devill upon the crosse, and will he now, being exalted into heaven, suffer him to shame any of his members? No, no, it is not possible, Christ on the Crosse made void the Devils hope, that our hope might never make us ashamed. Be strong then in the Lord Jesus, who soever thou art, that hast any measure of faith in his blood, and remember when thou hast to deale with the devill, thou hast to doe with a shamed creature, if thou hold out the blood of Christ; and come

come against the devill, in the glory of his crosse, the devill will be ashamed to looke on thee, yea, dastard like he will hide his head, hee will not abide the sight of thee: and this is a sweet meditation, let all such as truly beleetue in Christ, therein exercise themselves.

Againe, in that Christ his death was the devills shame, wee learne how we may come to shame the devill in the sight of God: it must bee by faith in Christ his death, by fetching our glory from his crosse, it may not be by standing on any worth or excellencie in our selves: no, no, in this case the common saying is true, *Confesse the truth and shame the diuell*, We must confesse, we deserue nothing by the best thing in us, but shame and confusion (if the Lord should deale with us in his iustice) and seeke onely to the Crosse of Christ for our glory, and say with the Apostle *Gal. 9. 14. God forbid, that I should reioyce but in the Crosse of our Lord Iesus Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto mee, and I unto the world*, and then wee shall be able to put the devill to shame.

One thing more we are to obserue from these words, the Apostle saith, Christ by his death made the devill ashamed openly, that is, as we haue heard, boldly, publikly, in the sight of God, of his Angels, and of all that looke on the Crosse of Christ by faith. Note wee then thus much. That the devills shame by the Crosse of Christ, is an open shame, it appears to God, to his Angels; yea to all that by faith looke on his Crosse.

No doubt the Apostle had his eye upon it, when hee said, *1 Cor. 2. 2. He esteemed not to know anything save Iesus Christ and him crucified*, hee thought nothing so worthy to be knowne as the glorious death of Christ.

If we then see not the glory of Christ on the Crosse, and the devills shame, yea if we see it not with delight and admiration, as it is said of the Angels. *1. Pet. 1. 12. They desire to behold the things of the Gospell and see them with admiration*: we haue no faith in the death of Christ, yea, let me tel you more, if we see not Christ his glory & the devills shame, set before us in the preaching of the Gospell and administration of the Sacraments (for therein is Christ crucified set before us, *Gal. 3. 1.*) If we take no delight in seeing by the eye of our soules the glorious shew that is set before vs in these things, but wee turne our backs vpon them, or our hearts are heauie and dull and not affected with them, and we haue no delight in them: it is more than a probable argument, wee haue no faith in the death of Christ.

It is a wonder to see, how many men and women are caried after vaine shewes and spectacles, and how they delight in them, how they runne after a may-game, or the like, it is because they are not able to see better things. Pray then that thine eyes may bee opened to see that glorious shew Christ Iesus made upon the Crosse, and that thou maist delight more in that, than in all the glittering shewes of the world: otherwise thou canst looke for no comfort in that glorious and triumphant death of Christ.

Come we to the third thing Christ did on the Crosse, in the last words of this verse. (*And hath triumphed over them in the same Crosse.*) Some read the words thus (*And hath triumphed over them in himselfe.*) But I take this reading (*hath triumphed over them in the same Crosse*) to be more agreeable to the context and scope of the Apostle: though the word (*Crosse*) be not found in the originall, yet it is to be understood and may truly be supplied, as we haue it in our English translation.

For when did Christ spoyle Satan and destroy his power but when he suffered death on the Crosse, as is plaine. *Heb. 2. 14.* and then also hee triumphed ouer him. Now the Apostles meaning in saying Christ triumphed ouer them is this:

That Christ by his death not onely overcame the devill and his Angels and

Vse 2.

By faith in Christ his death we may come to shame the devill in Gods sight.

Doff. 5.

The devills shame (by the Crosse of Christ) is an open shame.

Vse.

If we see not Christs glory and the devills shame in the Crosse of Christ, we haue no faith in the death of Christ.

stripped them of all power to hurt Gods chosen, but in his death hee got himselfe honour and glory over the devill, and he did as Conquerours use to doe in their triumphes, that as they riding in triumph make knowne their power and vertue over their enemies to their greater glory: so Christ on his Crosse to his great glory did manifest and make knowne his power over the devill; hee therein made his glorious power over the devill and his Angels fully appeare, both to God, to his Angels, and to all that looke on his crosse by faith, and that was his triumph. He on the crosse shewes himselfe more powerfull than the devill, and stronger than all the powers of hell; yea, therein hee manifested the powers of the God-head: for though hee cried with strong cries and teares, and sweat drops of blond, and cryed out, that God had forsaken him; yet his God-head sustained him, and even then by the power of his God-head be uttered words of faith and confidence, and said, *My God, my God.* In his greatest agony, hee shewed himselfe stronger than the devill and his angels, and overcame them, and so had the glory of a full victory and conquest over them.

Thus then conceive we these words, as if the Apostle had said; and in the same death on the Crosse hath manifested, and made his power over the Devill and his Angels fully to appeare: and gotten himselfe glory over them in the sight of God, his Angels, and all that looke on his Crosse by faith.

Hence it is most cleere, that Christ by his death hath gotten a full and absolute victory over the devill and his angels: for triumph ever followeth victory. No man of any wisdom will triumph and boast himselfe before the victory. When *Bembadad* King of *Aram*, comming to battell against the King of *Israel*, boasted himselfe, that the dust of Samaria should not be enough for all the people that followed him, for every man an handfull, 1 King 20. 10. 11. the King of *Israel* returned him this answer; *Let not him that girdeth his barmeasse boast himselfe, as hee that putteth it off.* Giving him to know, that hee boasted unreasonably before his time, he triumphed before the victory; which was folly in him, for the event of warre is uncertaine, and triumph ever followes victory. Christ therefore having triumphed over the devill and his Angels on his crosse, it is most certaine, hee had therein a full victory and conquest over the power of hell. And that makes for our exceeding great comfort, that Christ by his death, hath made a full and perfect satisfaction to God for the finnes of his chosen; yea, Christ his obedience satisfactory was fully accomplished on the Crosse.

And so are we to understand that speech of our Saviour, In his giving up the Ghost, *Iohn 19. 30. It is finished*: meaning, that his satisfactory obedience was then fully ended; and without question hee could not triumph, before hee had made a full and perfect satisfaction for us.

Objection: It may be said, whereto then serves Christ his resurrection, ascension, and sitting at the right hand of his Father?

Answer: they serve not to satisfie for finnes, but to apply (unto as many as truly believe) his perfect satisfaction made on the Crosse, and to put them in possession of the benefits of Christ his passion, *Rom. 4. 25.* the Apostle saith, *Christ was delivered to death for our finnes, and is risen againe for our justification* (that is) both to testifie his perfect obedience, and to apply it to us by his Spirit to our Iustification.

And the Apostle, *Ephes. 4. 16.* saith, *Christ ascended, that he might fill all things* (that is) as may appeare by the context of that place, that hee might fill Gods elect with all gifts of his spirit, needfull to their salvation, and so worke faith in them, to apprehend the merit of his death to their iustification. Wee are then to hold it for a certaine truth, that Christ his death on the crosse was a perfect satisfaction to God for the finnes of his chosen, and therein hee ended his satisfactory

Doctrine 6.
Christ by his death hath gotten a full and absolute victory over the Devill and his angels.

Vse.
Christ by his death hath made a full and perfect satisfaction, for the finnes of Gods chosen.

Objection.

Answer.

satisfactory obedience, and wee are to renounce all other expiatory sacrifice; whatsoever they be, they do much derogate from Christ his victory and triumph on the crosse; & such as maintain them are enemies to the crosse of Iesus Christ.

The next thing here offered to our consideration is this.

That Christ his crosse was as it were his triumphing chariot, whence we may easily see, that Christ got himselfe glory over his enemies, not out of that which is glorious, but out of that which in it selfe is shamefull and ignominious he got himselfe glory out of ignominy. It is the usuall manner of working with the Lord to bring one contrary out of another, especially when he hath any excellent thing to worke to his owne glory. In the first creation he made something, yea, *all things of nothing, he commanded the light to shine out of darknesse*, 2 Cor. 4. 6. in the preservation of his people, he caused the water to come out of a rocke, Numb. 20. 11. In the worke of the conversion of a sinner, ordinarily he workes by the preaching of the word, which is as contrary to nature, as fire to water: for there is no seed of faith in nature, and preaching is foolishnesse to the naturall man: and it is most cleare from this text, that the Lord Iesus brought life out of death; yea, out of his ignominious and cursed death of the crosse, he got himselfe exceeding great glory in the sight of God, his Angels, and of all that with the eye of faith behold his crosse: and this himselfe foretold, Iohn 13. 31, 32. that God should be glorified in him, in his death, that the power of his God-head should then manifestly appeare; as indeed it did, and was testified by many signes, as by darkning of the Sunne, the trembling of the earth, by cleaving a sunder of rocks, by the rising of some dead bodjes, by rending asunder the Vaile of the Temple, which drew from the Centurion: a plaine confession, Certainly this man was the Sonne of God, a thing very worthy our serious meditation.

Is it so then, that Christ triumphed, and got himselfe glory over the Devill and his Angels out of his crosse, even then when he suffered that shamefull and ignominious death on the crosse? Oh then how will he be glorified, when hee shall come with power and glory to judgement with thousands of his Angels? how shall he then get himselfe glory in rendring vengeance to the Devill, and to all wicked imps the instruments and lims of the Devill. Wicked men happily thinke, because Christ is a Saviour, therefore he will be a mild and favourable Judge, and not deale with them in rigour and severity: but let them know, that when he shall put on *his garment dipt in blood*, as we have it, Revel. 19. 13. when hee shall arise and take hold of Judgement, they shall finde him a most terrible God of vengeance; if he that is a sweet and comfortable Saviour become bitter and terrible; surely his bitterness and terror will be intollerable, and he will be most dreadfull to all his enemies, even to all such as impugne and hinder the course of his Gospell; yea, as the Apostle saith, 2 Thes. 1. 8. *to all that know not God, and which obey not unto the Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ*. Let all ignorant persons then, and all hard hearted sinners thinke upon it, and in feare labour to make this terrible Judge their gracious and comfortable Saviour.

Againe, is it so, that Christ got himselfe glory even out of his ignominious death on the crosse? then let al true members of Iesus Christ know to their comfort, that he now raiging in Heaven, will worke their glory out of their sufferings, be they never so shamefull: yea, as the Apostle saith, Rom. 8. 37. through him they shall be more than conquerours, they shall be triumphers in their sufferings, he will supply to them such strength of faith and patience, as their very enemies shall stand amazed and wonder at them, and say, as the chiefe Priests and Scribes said, Act. 4. 16. *What shall we doe to these men* (a speech worthy observation) they that had power to imprison the Apostles, or to doe with them what they would, stand agast and at their wits end, and know not what to doe to poore, weake, unarmed and friendlesse men: a strange thing, and such a thing as nature, reason, and the world understands not. Thus no doubt will the Lord Iesus shew

Ff 3

forth

Popish expiatory sacrifices doe much derogate from Christ his triumph on the Crosse.

Doctrin 7. Christ got himselfe glory not out of that which is glorious, but out of his ignominious death on the crosse.

Use 1. Christ will be exceedingly glorified, when he shall come to judgement, in rendring vengeance to the devill, and to all the wicked.

Note.

Use 2. Christ will worke the glory of all his true members out of their sufferings, be they never so shamefull.

forth his power in all his members, as he got himselfe glory out of his own cursed death, so certainly will he shew his power, and be glorified in thy sufferings, if thou belong to him: it is a shrewd evidence, men belong not to Christ: when under the crosse they rage and storme, and foame out their owne shame, the folly and corruption of their owne hearts: if thou belong to Christ, Christ will be glorified in thee, not onely in thy actions, but in thy passions, in thy sufferings also, he will manifest his power in thy patience, faith and constancy under the crosse, he will make thee more than a conquerour in thy greatest afflictions.

Observe we further, that when Christ in the eye of the world had shame, and seemed to be overcome, then had he glory, he vanquished, and triumphed over his enemies in his crosse: hence we are to take out this poynt of instruction, that we are not to judge of any by the outward appearance.

It is our Saviours owne rule, Ioh. 7. 24. *Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgement.* And the reason of this is given, Eccle. 9. 1. *No man knoweth either love or hatred of all that is before them* (that is to say) by the consideration of outward things, it cannot be gathered whom God doth love or hate, indeed we may, and ought to despise a vile person, Psal. 15. 4. whether rich or poore for his vilenesse; yet may we not judge him vile before the time (that is to say) before the Lord hath discovered him to bee so by his fruits; it is the corruption of our nature, to judge both our selves and others, by the outward state in this life: to thinke if any man thrive in the world, then God loves him; and if he bee crossed in outward things, then God hates him. But we must learne to reforme our judgement in this point, and know, that outward prosperity or adversity, are leaden rules to judge by: it is no good argument to say, God loves us because we prosper in the world; or he hates us, because we are crossed in outward things. No, no, we are to looke into the causes and qualification of the mind, repentance, or hardnesse and continuance in sinne: if wee finde the latter of these, howsoever we prosper: yet let us know, it is not a blessing, but a curse, and it comes indeed from the providence of God, but to make his judgement just when he falls upon us, by reason of our abuse of his mercy.

Let us then strive after this grace, that we may judge aright both of our selves and others, and especially in time of affliction. It is a singular grace of God to judge rightly of others in time of affliction. David pronounceth a blessing on him, that judgeth wisely of the poore, Psal. 41. 1. *Blessed is he that judgeth wisely of the poore: the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble &c.* If wee judge the poore the worse, because of his poverty; or more hardly judge of any, because he is in affliction; be it one that hath been in our knowledge guilty of some great sinne (as we are ready to say, if we see one, whom we have knowne guilty of some foule sinne to bee afflicted, I know it would come home to him, the Lord would plague him, and not suffer him to goe unpunished) if we thus judge of the afflicted, we may happily sinne against the generation of Gods children, as David saith, Psal. 73. 15. for the Lord may have pardoned that sinne, and we judging him plagued for it, we condemne him whom God hath acquitted, and that is a fearefull presumption, and such as cannot escape the punishing hand of God.

Let us therefore learne to contemne a vile person discovered to be so, for his vilenesse, but take heed we judge of no man by the outward appearance, judge wisely of the poore and afflicted, that we may bee blessed of the Lord, and that he in mercy may deliver us in the time of our owne troubles.

Doct. 8.

We are not to judge of any by the outward appearance.

Reason.

Vse 2.

Reproofe of such as judge both themselves and others by their outward state in this life.

Verf. 16. *Let no man therefore condemne you in meat and drinke, or in respect of an holy day, or of a new Moone, or of the Sabbath dayes.*

IN this verse we have the Apostles conclusion of his refutation of legall ceremonies, which were urged on the Colossians by false teachers, of necessary use to salvation: for the Apostle began to deale in particular against those ceremonies, verf. 11. and from that verse to this, hath proved by many arguments.

That there is perfect salvation, and all things needfull to salvation to be found in Christ; and that in him such as beleeve are compleat and have all perfection.

Therefore legall ceremonies are needlesse: this the Apostle inferreth in this verse by way of dehortation, and that in regard of the premised reason, they should not let any man condemne them, touching their neglect of those legall ceremonies, and he doth insist in some certaine kinds of them urged by false teachers, and under them comprehends all the rest; as may appeare by his generall reason in this verse following.

He gives instance of two sorts. First, the ceremoniall choice of meates and drinckes, *Let no man condemne you in meat and drinke.*

Secondly, the observation of Iewish feasts, which he doth expresse in these particulars, *holy dayes, new Moones or Sabbath dayes.*

Come wee to consider the words of this verse as they are laid downe in order: and first of these words [*Let no man condemne you in your meat and drinke*] The word translated *condemne*, doth properly signifie *judge*: it is usuall in Scripture to put downe the one for the other: the generall word *judge*, for the speciall *condemne*: we have it often so, Rom. 14. the same originall word is in our English rendred, and that truly, verf. 3. *judge*, and verf. 4. *condemne*, for indeed the Apostles meaning in saying, *let no man condemne you*, is, let no man spend his judgement upon you in the worst part, let him not judge you to sinne, and condemne you to sinne in meat and drinke, that is, touching meates and drinckes prohibited, touching the meates and drinckes forbidden by *Moses Law*: let no man judge you to sinne in the use of them.

This could not be that the Colossians, or any other, could hinder false teachers for iudging hardly of them for eating and drinking meates and drinckes forbidden in *Moses Law*.

It is true indeed they could not; therefore the Apostles meaning is, they should not care for their unjust iudgement spent on them, condemning them of sinne when they ought not.

And thus we are to conceive these words, as if the Apostle had said, Care not for it, regard it not, that any man doth iudge you faulty, and condemne you of sinne, for eating and drinking of meates and drinckes forbidden in the Law of *Moses*: that iudgement and condemnation of you is unjust.

Now in the first place wee are to marke the manner of the Apostles speech; his speech is not a bare and simple admonition, but a powerfull inhibition: hee saith not, take heed that no man condemne you, but hee delivers his speech in manner of a law and forme of commanding iurisdiction; *let no man condemne you, &c.* The Colossians were in danger to suffer false teachers to iudge and condemne them in regard of legall ceremonies, and to take to heart their unjust censures: the Apostle therefore interposeth his Apostolicall authority, whereby he had power to give precepts binding conscience, and he enioynes them not to suffer any so to doe; *let no man (saith the Apostle) condemne you*; let no man lay it upon you as a law.

And that the Ministers of the Gospel may exercise that power that is given to them, howsoever they may not give new precepts binding conscience, yet they consenting with the word of God, their doctrine being grounded on the writings

Interpretation.

Obiect.

Ans.

Doctr. 1.
Though the
Ministers of
the Gospel

may not give new precepts binding conscience, yet their doctrine being grounded on the written word of God, may be charged upon mens consciences, and they may enioyne this to be done, or that to be avoyded.

Vse.

Particular application to some being in danger to be led aside into that dangerous schisme of Brownisme.

Doct. 2.

It is the property of false teachers to judge and condemne men chiefly for the use or neglect of outward things.

Vse.

Popish teachers plainly discover themselves to be led with a spirit of error.

Prou. 26. 3.

writings of the Prophets and Apostles : they may charge it on the consciences of men, and by way of injunction as occasion is offered, say, let this bee done, or let that be avoyded. The Apostle hath taught us, that it is a part of the ministeriall office *to be instant*, 2 Tim. 4. 1. and that must be by commanding, urging, perswading, and forbidding, &c. as occasion is offered, and especially then may the Ministers of the Gospell use this manner of speaking, when they see their people in danger to revolt from the truth, and to be seduced; they may then bee instant with them, and lay it as a law on their consciences, and say, Let no man seduce you, let no man draw you away from the truth. And thus must I needs at this time frame and addresse my speech to some in our Church. I see some amongst us in danger to bee seduced and led aside into that dangerous schisme of Brownisme; to such therefore I speake: let them consider what I say, and the Lord give them a right understanding in all things.

Wee in this Church of England have (blessed be God for it) the truth of religion held, taught, and professed; yea, the Brownists themselves cannot deny, but that the whole fundamentall substance of truth is amongst us; yea, I dare be bold to say further, in the word of truth, and in the name of God, and to pawne mine owne soule upon it, wee have the substance of the truth grounded on the written word of the Prophets and the Apostles: and therefore upon this ground I must charge thee (whosoever thou art, that art wavering, and in danger to be seduced and drawn to Brownisme) and lay it a law upon thy soule and conscience: let no man seduce thee, and draw thee away from the truth of religion held and professed amongst us. It is a saying worthy to be remembred, and often to bee thought on, that in divine matters, in matters of so high a nature as religion is, no consultation is to be used. Stand not thou now to consult of a change of religion, but bee resolved of the truth held and professed, and tread under foot all perswasions to the contrary whatsoever. And thus I thought good to speak, occasioned from the manner of the Apostles speech in this place.

Now from the matter of this powerfull injunction, in that the Apostle saith, *let no man condemne you in meat and drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new Moone, or of the Sabbath dayes*: we may easily gather, that it is the nature of an erroneous spirit, of a false teacher, to judge or condemne men, and that chiefly for outward things in respect of meat, drink, observation of daies, & the like. Therefore the Apostle giveth the Colossians a countermand, and enioynes them not to suffer any false teachers to joyne with them: yea, it is the property of a false teacher, rather to iudge and condemne for the use or neglect of outward things, than for the breach and transgression of the morall Law of God: see it in one example. The Scribes and Pharisees did more condemne for not washing hands before meat, and the neglect of other things devised by themselves, than they did for the transgression of Gods commandements: our Saviour reproveth them for it, Matth. 15. from vers. 3. to 10.

Let this serve to make knowne to us, that the teachers among the Papists are led with a spirit of error: wee shall easily finde this marke on their fore-heads, it is apparant, every man may see it: they more urge their owne fleshy and ceremoniall will-worship, then they doe the spirituall worship of God: yea, it is extant and to be found upon record in their owne stories, that men have beene more severely punished for eating flesh on a friday, than for simple fornication, or following strange flesh, which is a certaine note and badge of an Antichristian Church. Learne wee hereby to discern them and to take knowledge of the spirit by which they are led, and so according to the commandement of the Apostle in this place regard not their uniuersall censures, calling thee heretick, and loading thee with approbrious names: they will condemne thee to the pit of hell, for not observing some rotten devise of their owne: esteeme it not, but set light by it, as the breath of men; yea, as the curse that is causelesse, and shall never come.

The

The next thing offered to our conſideration from this injunction is, the inſtance here given by the Apoſtle, he ſaith, *let no man condemne you*, and he doth inſtance in *meate and drinke*.

Hence wee may take up this concluſion, That through Chriſt wee have free liberty in meate and drinke: we may freely eate any kinde of meat, and drinke any kinde of drinke: and men are not to accuſe and condemne us of ſin in ſo doing, if they doe, we are not to regard their cenſure.

Among the Jewes, before the coming of Chriſt, there was a difference of meates; ſome were cleane, and ſome were uncleane and forbidden: wee may reade of them, Levit. 11. thorow our, and Dent. 14. from verſe 4. to the end of the 21. but now ſince the death of Chriſt, all kindes of meat and drinke are left to our liberty, that difference is taken away, and as the Apoſtle ſaith, Tit. 2. 15. *To the pure all things are pure*: and Rom. chap. 14. verſe 14. *I know (ſaith the Apoſtle) and am perſwaded through the Lord Jeſus, that there is nothing uncleane of it ſelfe, but unto him that iudgeth any thing uncleane, to him it is uncleane*: and verſe 20. *all things indeed are pure*.

The reaſon of this is plaine: before the coming of Chriſt, ſome meates were cleane, and ſome uncleane, to ſignifie a difference betweene Jew and Gentile, and that the Jew ſhould not communicate with the Gentile; but now by Chriſt, the partition wall is broken downe, and of two they are made one in him, Ephes. 2. 14. 15. Therefore the difference of meates is taken away, and Chriſtians may now with good conſcience, with moderation eat any kinde of meat, and drinke any kinde of drinke; it is therefore wicked and injurious to Chriſt his death to forbid the eating of ſome kinde of meates at ſome times, as the Papiſts doe at this day. It is made by the Apoſtle, a badge of Antichriſtian Apoſtaſie, 1 Tim. 4. 3. *commanding to abſtaine from meates which God hath created, to be received with giving thanks, of them which believe and know the truth*.

Obiect. Oh but ſaith the Papiſt, we forbid not the eating of any meat as uncleane, but as unlawful for a time, in regard of the commandment of the Church.
Anſw. A meere ſhift and colour of their falſhood in hypocriſie: for firſt, we finde it in their bookes that fleſh is forbidden, becauſe it was accuſed, and not fiſh in the dayes of *Noah*, therefore they forbid it as uncleane.

Again, they forbid it for holineſſe, and for religion, making it part of Gods worſhip, to abſtaine from ſome meates at ſome times: therefore they condemne it as unholy and unclean at that time, though not by creation, yet by their owne prohibition, and ſo their diſtinction is fooliſh and the parts of it fall one into another, and they cannot poſſibly free themſelves in this point from teaching a doctrine of Devils.

But will ſome ſay, may not our governours forbid the eating of meates at ſome times, and if they doe, are not we to obey them?

They may, and wee are to obey them: but marke how they may forbid the eating of ſome kind of meates at ſome times by reaſon of want, for maintenance, of ſome calling in the Common-wealth, or for other civill reſpects, but not for religion, and herein we are to obey them.

A gaine, they may at ſome times injoyne us abſtinance from this, or that kinde of meat, not in regard of the kind, but in reſpect of the quantity, or quality of meat, that we abſtaine from our ordinary diet; and that we which doe eate be not of the daintieſt, Dan. 10. 3. In a word, they may in time of famine and ſcarcity injoyne us a publike faſt, that wee may teſtifie our humiliation, and better attend on the exerciſes of the Word and Prayer, and we are then alſo to obey them, theſe cautions obſerved.

Fiſt, that our faſting bee void of ſuperſtition, and that wee place no worſhip of God in it, but hold it onely as an helpe to further us in the duties of Religion.

Secondly,

Doctr. 3.

We have free liberty through Chriſt in the uſe of meate and drinke.

Reason.

Vſe 1.

It is iniurious to Chriſt his death to forbid the eating of ſome kind of meates at ſome times, as the Papiſts doe.

Quæſt.

Anſwer

Cautions to be obſerved in keeping a faſt.

2

Secondly, that we have no opinion of merit by it, that thereby we merit forgiveness of finnes, encrease of grace, or the like.

3

Thirdly, that we hold it not of absolute necessity.

4

And lastly, that it be without breach of the rule of charity, either hurting our selves, and making us thereby unfit for good duties, or giving offence to others, such as are weake in knowledge, causing them to call our Christian liberty into question. For first, we are to informe them that they may thus abstaine, because the Magistrate by his authority doth not take away the use of the things we abstaine from, but onely order and moderate the same.

Thus wee see that our Magistrates may forbid the eating of meates at some times, and how we may also with good conscience obey them.

Use 2.

We are to use our Christian liberty touching meates and drinckes with thanksgiving and in sobriety.

And yet, this remaines a truth, that wee have liberty through Christ to eat any kinde of meate, and that we may not be interdicted any kind of meate, at any time, as unholy or uncleane, as it is among the Papists.

And let us use this liberty, purchased by Christ, with thanksgiving, and in sobriety and moderation, that by our eating and drinking we may bee more fit to serve God, and to doe good duties. Let us eat in time for strength, and not for drunkenesse, Eccles. 10, 27. Let us not tire our selves with eating and drinking, and disable our selves, and make our selves fit for nothing but eating and drinking, and then pretend Christian liberty; so doing, we turne Christian liberty into unchristian, yea brutish licence to sinne, and we use our liberty as an occasion to the flesh.

Let this bee farre from us, and remember wee the words of the holy Ghost, 1 Pet. 5, 8. *Be sober and watch, for your adversary the devil (as a roaring Lion) walketh about seeking whom he may devour:* giving to understand, that an Epicure or drunkard is a fit prey of the devill.

Come we to the second sort of legall Ceremonies, wherein the Apostle doth insist, namely the observation of Iewish feasts, in the words following: *in respect of an holy day, or of the new Moone, or of the Sabbath day.*

Interpretation.

1

2

3

For the understanding of these words, wee must know that the Iewes had many festivall dayes, which they were to observe and keepe holy by the appointment of the Lord: but three speciall great feasts had they every yeere above the rest, which were called solemne feasts, or holy convocations; namely, The feast of passeover, or unleavened bread. The feast of Pentecost, named the feast of the first fruits: and the feast of Tabernacles, or gathering in of their fruits in the end of the yeere. We reade of them, Exod. 23. from vers. 14. to the 20: Levit throughout. Deut. 16. from the beginning to verse 15. They were also appointed to offer a burnt offering unto the Lord, in the beginning of their moneth. Numb. 28. 11. and they had an holy convocation, and were to keepe the first and last day of their great feasts, as Labbath: we finde it so, Levit. 23. 35. 39. These things rightly conceived, will leade us to the true sense and meaning of the Apostle in this place. For first, by holy day or feast, wee are to understand those three solemne feasts, the Passeover, Pentecost, and the feast of Tabernacles: by new Moone, the feast they kept in the beginning of their moneth. by Sabbath dayes, not the Lords ordinary Saubath, but the first and last day of their great feasts.

Now whereas the Apostle saith [*in respect*] it may be expounded either in regard of the whole feast, or (as the originall word signifieth) in regard of part: for happily some amongst the Colossians did in part observe the Iewish feasts, and in part neglect. Thus then wee are to understand these words, as if the Apostle had said; Let no man condemne you for neglect of any great feast of the Iewes, or for not observing their feast of the new Moone, or the first or last day of their great feasts: or briefly thus: Let no man lay sinne upon you for neglect of any Iewish holy day, either in whole or in part.

Now

Now first, from the second instance of the Apostle, in that hee saith, *let no man condemne you in the observation of any Iewish feast*: It is manifest and cleare.

That wee now through Christ (since the death of Christ) have a liberty in regard of dayes; we now in time of the Gospell are not bound (as the Iewes were) to the observation and keeping of any one set day above another, excepting onely the Lords day.

It is that which the Apostle findes blame-worthy in the Galatians, Gal. 4. 10. That they observed daies, and monethes, and times, and yeeres. Yea, he saith in the verse following, that he was afraid of them, lest he had bestowed his labour on them in vaine, in that they did trowe to those Iewish observations, and he insists in the observation of dayes, and times, and yeeres. But that we mistake not the Apostles meaning (his speech being generall.)

Know we that he commends not there the naturall observation of dayes and times, as the observation of day and night, sommer and winter, harvest and seed time, nor yet the civill observation of times; as the time of planting, setting, sowing, and plucking up that which is planted, spoken of, Eccles. 3. 2. But he reprooves them for their observation of dayes and times, as a thing to which they thought they were bound in conscience, and as out of holinesse. that the Apostle deales against, as opposite and contrary to the liberty of Christians.

Object. Rom. 14. 6. The Apostle saith, *He that observeth the day, observeth it to the Lord*: Therefore we may now in time of the Gospell observe a day unto the Lord, as a part of religion and his worship.

Ans. Wee are to consider of whom the Apostle there speaks, namely, of such as are weake, and not fully instructed in Christian liberty, and his meaning is, that they in their weaknesse intended to observe a day to the honour of God, and thought they did so, but that was their weaknesse and errour; and so the place makes nothing against the truth of this conclusion: That wee now under the Gospell, are not bound in conscience to a religious observation of one set day above another, except onely the Lords Sabbath.

How then can the Papists justify their festivall dayes, and their solemnnities, which they urge on men, and bind their consciences with the necessary observation of them? they teach that the sanctification and keeping of their appointed feasts is necessary; how then can they free themselves from the brand of such teachers as the Apostle deales against in this verse, even such as bind the conscience when they ought not, and charge men with sinne unjustly?

Oh, saith the Papist (he hath his cavilling exception ready) the Apostle here dealt against Iewish observation of daies and Iudaicall festivities; and you misapply the text against Christian holy dayes; such as ours be.

See the cunning of these men to deceive themselves, what is this but a meere shift? for howsoever, it is true, the Apostle dealt against Iewish feasts, yet the doctrine of this place may be generally applyed against Iewish, or any other superstitious observation of dayes whatsoever. The Papists in this case doe, as hee that strip himselfe of one sort of clothing, and for pride doth invest himselfe with a suit of a newer fashion; every man knowes he putt not away his pride, but onely changeth his fashion: so the Papists doe but change from one suite of sin to another, they keepe not the same feasts that the Iewes did, but they have new feasts in their stead, and those full of grosse superstition, for they hold the observation of them necessary, yea part of Gods worships: and place greater holinesse in those feasts than in the Lords Sabbath, and dedicate many of them to the honour of Saints and Martyrs, that they may be partakers of their merits, and helped by their prayers. Now what is this, but most grosse & abominable Idolatry? & we must needs in this respect hold them in the number of false teachers.

But

Dott. 4.

Through Christ wee have free liberty in regard of the observation of dayes, excepting onely the Lords day.

Object.

Ans.

Confutation
of Popish festivall dayes urged by the Papists as necessary to be observed.

Object.

Ans.

2

Secondly, that we have no opinion of merit by it, that thereby we merit forgiveness of sinnes, encrease of grace, or the like.

3

Thirdly, that we hold it not of absolute necessity.

4

And lastly, that it be without breach of the rule of charity, either hurting our selves, and making us thereby unfit for good duties, or giving offence to others, such as are weake in knowledge, causing them to call our Christian liberty into question. For first, we are to informe them that they may thus abstaine, because the Magistrate by his authority doth not take away the use of the things we abstaine from, but onely order and moderate the same.

Thus wee see that our Magistrates may forbid the eating of meates at some times, and how we may also with good conscience obey them.

Use 2.

We are to use our Christian liberty touching meates and drinckes with thanksgiving, and in sobriety.

And yet, this remaines a truth, that wee have liberty through Christ to eate any kinde of meate, and that we may not be interdicted any kind of meat, at any time, as unholy or uncleane, as it is among the Papists.

And let us use this liberty, purchased by Christ, with thanksgiving, and in sobriety and moderation, that by our eating and drinking we may bee more fit to serve God, and to doe good duties. Let us eate in time for strength, and not for drunkenesse, Eccles. 10, 27. Let us not tire our selves with eating and drinking, and disable our selves, and make our selves fit for nothing but eating and drinking, and then pretend Christian liberty; so doing, we turne Christian liberty into unchristian, yea brutish licence to sinne, and we use our liberty as an occasion to the flesh.

Let this bee farre from us, and remember wee the words of the holy Ghost, 1 Pet. 5, 8. *Bee sober and watch, for your adversary the devil (as a roaring Lion) walketh about seeking whom he may devour: giving to understand, that an Epicure or drunkard is a fit prey of the devill.*

Come we to the second sort of legall Ceremonies, wherein the Apostle doth insist, namely the observation of Iewish feasts, in the words following: *] or in respect of an holy day, or of the new Moone, or of the Sabbath day.*

Interpretation.

1

2

3

For the understanding of these words, wee must know that the Iewes had many festivall dayes, which they were to observe and keepe holy by the appointment of the Lord: but three speciall great feasts had they every yeere above the rest, which were called solemne feasts, or holy convocations; namely, The feast of passeover, or unleavened bread. The feast of Pentecost, named the feast of the first fruits: and the feast of Tabernacles, or gathering in of their fruits in the end of the yeere. We reade of them, Exod. 23. from vers. 14. to the 20: Levit throughout. Deut. 16. from the beginning to verse 15. They were also appointed to offer a burnt offering unto the Lord, in the beginning of their monethes. Numb. 28. 11. and they had an holy convocation, and were to keepe the first and last day of their great feasts, as Labbath: we finde it so, Levit. 23. 35. 39. These things rightly conceived, will leade us to the true sense and meaning of the Apostle in this place. For first, by holy day or feast, wee are to understand those three solemne feasts, the Passeover, Pentecost, and the feast of Tabernacles: by new Moone, the feast they kept in the beginning of their moneth. by Sabbath dayes, not the Lords ordinary Saubath, but the first and last day of their great feasts.

Now whereas the Apostle saith *[in respect]* it may be expounded either in regard of the whole feast, or (as the originall word signifieth) in regard of part of it: for happily some amongst the Colossians did in part observe the Iewish feasts, and in part neglect. Thus then wee are to understand these words, as if the Apostle had said; Let no man condemne you for neglect of any great feast of the Iewes, or for not observing their feast of the new Moone, or the first or last day of their great feasts: or briefly thus: Let no man lay sinne upon you for neglect of any Iewish holy day, either in whole or in part.

Now

Now first, from the second instance of the Apostle, in that hee saith, *let no man condemne you in the observation of any Iewish feast*: It is manifest and cleare.

That wee now through Christ (since the death of Christ) have a liberty in regard of dayes; we now in time of the Gospell are not bound (as the Iewes were) to the observation and keeping of any one set day above another, excepting onely the Lords day.

It is that which the Apostle findes blame-worthy in the Galatians, Gal. 4. 10. That they observed daies, and monethes, and times, and yeeres. Yea, he saith in the verse following, that he was afraid of them, lest he had bestowed his labour on them in vaine, in that they did turne to those Iewish observations, and he insists in the observation of dayes, and times, and yeeres. But that we mistake not the Apostles meaning (his speech being generall.)

Know we that he commends not there the naturall observation of dayes and times, as the observation of day and night, sommer and winter, harvest and seed time, nor yet the civill observation of times; as the time of planting, setting, sowing, and plucking up that which is planted, spoken of, Eccles. 3. 2. But he reprooves them for their observation of dayes and times, as a thing to which they thought they were bound in conscience, and as out of holinesse, that the Apostle deales against, as opposite and contrary to the liberty of Christians.

Object. Rom. 14. 6. The Apostle saith, *He that observeth the day, observeth it to the Lord*: Therefore we may now in time of the Gospell observe a day unto the Lord, as a part of religion and his worship.

Answer. Wee are to consider of whom the Apostle there speaks, namely, of such as are weake, and not fully instructed in Christian liberty, and his meaning is, that they in their weaknesse intended to observe a day to the honour of God, and thought they did so, but that was their weaknesse and error; and so the place makes nothing against the truth of this conclusion; That wee now under the Gospell, are not bound in conscience to a religious observation of one set day above another, except onely the Lords Sabbath.

How then can the Papists justifie their festivall dayes, and their set solemnities, which they urge on men, and bind their consciences with the necessary observation of them? they teach that the sanctification and keeping of their appointed feasts is necessary; how then can they free themselves from the brand of such teachers as the Apostle deales against in this verse, even such as bind the conscience when they ought not, and charge men with sinne unjustly?

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Object.

Answer.

Obj.

Confutation of Popish festivall dayes urged by the Papists as necessary to be observed.

Object.

Answer.

Answer.

Object.

But may some say, may not wee have solemnities, and festinall dayes appoynted by our Church, and they being appoynted may we not obserue them?

Answer.

Our Church may appoynt such dayes, and being appoynted we may obserue them, Ioh. 10. 22: Wee readethere was the feast of Dedication at Ierusalem, which was a feast ordained by the Church, in the time of *Iudas Machabrus*, as we find, 1. Mach. 4. 59. in remembrance of the reparation of the temple, and deliverance from the tyrannie of *Antiochus*: and vers. 23. Christ himselfe was present at the feast, and by his presence he hath given manifest allowance of this, that the Church may appoynt festinall dayes, and being appoynted, we may obserue them, yet know how the Church may appoynt, and how wee may obserue them being appoynted, namely with these cautions.

How the
Church may
appoint and
how we may
observe festi-
vall dayes.

First, if the appointment and observation of them be held as a thing indifferent, and not of absolute necessity.

Secondly, if it be void of superstition, neither placing the worship of God, nor any force of religion in that observation of them, nor with any opinion of holinesse in those times, but that the appointment of them, be for the assembly of Gods people, for the exercise of the Word and Prayer.

Thus may the Church appoint festivities, and being so appointed wee may obserue them: and thus doth the Church of England observe holy daies and no otherwise; and therefore the Brownists either ignorantly, or maliciously doe us wrong, in demanding whether our feasts be the true worship of God or no, in their printed questions, for wee place no worship of God in them; (but that by the way.)

We see how the Church may appoint festivities, and how wee may observe them; and yet this is still a certaine truth, that wee now in time of the Gospell are not bound in conscience, and necessarily to the true religious observation of dayes, except onely the Sabbath day. And not to passe from this without some word of exhortation.

Vse 2.

We are not to
make our selves
slaves to cer-
taine dayes.

Is it so, that we now in time of the Gospell through Christ have this liberty, that we are not tied in conscience to necessary observation of any dayes, excepting onely the Sabbath? Then let us not forgoe this liberty, and now make our selves slaves to certaine dayes, and that after the manner of the very Heathen.

Quest.**Answer.**

I answer, that is done when wee put a difference betweene day and day, in regard of good or bad success; as (forsooth) this is a dismall day, a day of bad success; therefore wee may not put on new garments, take a journey, or begin any worke on that day. Thus to observe dayes after an Heathenish manner, is utterly to renounce Christian liberty; yes, to professe that wee are still in bondage to sin, Satan, and the corruption of our owne hearts. Let this be farre from us, and let us remember what the Lord saith unto his people by the mouth of his Prophet, Ier. 10. 2. *Learn not the way of the Heathen, and be not afraid for the signes of heaven: for the signes of heaven, if we feare them, certainly wee feare not God.* Therefore let us take heed of this, let us hold fast our liberty (in respect of daies) purchased by Christ, and use it with good conscience: remember thou art set free by Christ, from the observation of any Iewish feast; therefore keepe thou every day a Christian feast.

Quest.**Answer.**

How is that, may some say?
I will tell thee in a word; purpose every day to avoid all and every sinne, let thy selfe every houre of the day in the sight of God, and walke as before him, carefully and conscionably in all good duties; and so doing thou shalt keepe a good conscience: and that the Wise man hath told us, Prou. chap. 15. vers. 15. *is continual feast*; even every day holy day. Some there be that take occasion from the text of the Apostle, to open their mouths against the Lords ordinary Sabbath, and to say it is here put among the ceremonies of the Jewes, and so

is abrogated, and quite abolished, and we ought not to keepe it: but if wee remember the exposition of the words, they may be answered in a word, that the Apostle here speaks not of the Lords ordinary Sabbath, but of the first and last day of the great feasts of the Jewes; yet I thinke it not amisse to stand a while to make knowe, and to prove the morallity of the Lords Sabbath. And that wee erre not in the beginning, wee must know that the Sabbath was before the death of Christ, in part ceremoniall (namely) as it was a seventh day from the creation, and in regard of the strict rest of that day enjoyned to the Jewes, to whom it was not lawfull to kindle a fire, Exod. 35. 3. But as it is a day of rest with some more liberty, in regard of things either of present necessity, as the quenching of a fire having taken hold on an house, or of lawfull convenience, as preparing of frugall meate and dier, one of the publike exercise, or without hinderance of it: as it is thus a day of rest set apart for the service of God, onely in the exercises of religion, and workes of mercy and love; so it is morall and perpetuall. I might prove this by many argument. Consider wee only these two.

First, the commandement of keeping the Sabbath was given to Adam in Paradise before the fall, and therefore doubtlesse it is morall and perpetuall, for for hee then needed not any ceremony to leade him to Christ, hee needed not to believe in Christ, having not sinned.

Againe, it is ingrafted in nature that there should be a time set apart from worldly businesse, and be bestowed on matters concerning Religion. There was no Nation, almost among the Gentiles which had not some festivall daies for the publike exercise of their Religion, wherein though they erred, yet it sheweth that it was grounded on the Law of nature, that some time should be appointed for the speciall worship of God, and consequently it proves the commandement to be morall and perpetuall.

Now then is it so, that the Sabbath is morall and perpetuall? let us not then only abstaine from open prophanation, by eating, drinking, and immoderate feeding; or whatsoever may make us unfit for the service of God in the duties of Religion. But let us take heed that wee rest not in the outward and ceremoniall use of the Sabbath, which is a thing too common amongst men; many come to the Church and heare the Word, and goe home againe without any profit by it; yea, with much hurt to their soules: they keepe the Sabbath only for fashion, not with any regard of true godlienesse, never labouring by the use of the Sabbath, to grow in love towards God, or tender affection towards men, for this is the true keeping of the Sabbath.

Now then to stirre us up to be more carefull hereafter of this duty, consider onely these two things.

First, he or she that is a wilfull Sabbath-breaker, is no true childe of God; for he that is a true childe of God, will reason with Saint James, Chap. 2. 10. 11. that he that hath commanded one thing, hath commanded another, and breake one commandement of God, and be guilty of all: therefore he seares the breach of every Commandement of God.

Againe, call to minde what the Lord saith in the end of the fourth commandement, that he hath blessed it and sanctified it, (that is) he hath appointed it for holy uses, that it might be a meane of blessing both on thy soule, body, and whole estate: If then thou wouldest make it good, to the comfort of thine owne soule, that thou art a childe of God: yea, if thou tender the good of thy life, and wouldest bring downe a blessing on thine owne soule, body, and whole estate: be carefull to sanctifie the Lords Sabbath, and labour by the use of it to be brought nearer to God by faith and repentance, and neerer to thy brethren in true hearted affection; these be much hated, grudging, and heart-burning among men, one against another, what is the cause? Surely amongst other this

That the Sabbath is morall and perpetuall, proved.

Vf.

Wee must not onely abstaine from open prophanation of the Sabbath, but wee must also take heed that wee rest not in a ceremoniall use of it.

Note.

is one speciall cause, wee are carelesse in the sanctification of the Sabbath, wee keepe it onely for fashion, and not as wee ought. Let us therefore hereafter be more carefull of this duty.

Verf. 17. *Which are but a shadow of things to come: but the body is in Christ.*

THis verse hath respect to the verse immediately foregoing as a further confirmation of it by a new argument, and in it is also couched an answer to a secret exception, that false teachers might take against the Apostles conclusion in the verse before; for haply they might except against him, and say: is not the choice of meats and observation of solemne feasts, new Moones, and the use of other ceremonies among the Jewes, a thing commanded of God? why then should they be neglected?

To this the Apostle doth insoldan answer in the words of this verse, and it is this. That they were indeed commanded of God, but only to this end, to shadow out Christ to come, and at his comming to cease and have an end: and so the Apostles argument for confirmation of his conclusion is here taken from the end and use of the ceremonies of the Law, and may thus be framed.

The Ceremonies of Moses Law were appointed by God to prefigure and shadow out Christ to come.

Therefore Christ being now exhibited and come in the flesh, there is no more use of these Ceremonies, they have ended their office in Christ.

In this Verse more specially wee have, First a description of the Legall Ceremonies, what they were in their owne nature and proper use; namely, that they are a shadow of things to come.

Secondly, what Christ is in respect of them: that hee is the body of those shadowes in the words following, *but the body is in Christ.*

Inter-
pretation

Come wee to consider of the words of this Verse, (*Which*) that is, which Ceremonies before mentioned, and all other of like sort. (*A shadow*) This word (shadow) is a word of similitude or comparison, and the meaning is a type of resemblance figuring and shewing things to come, and the legall Ceremonies are thus compared to a shadow, especially in two respects:

First, because as a shadow doth shew the body obscurely (for who can perfectly know the body by the shadow?) so the types and figures of the old Law did obscurely shew things to come.

Secondly, because a shadow is a thing without substance, and formally by it selfe a meere accident: so the rites and ceremonies of the Law taken by themselves were empty shewes (of good things to come) that is, of Christ to come, of the mysteries and benefits of Christ, as reconciliation with God, justification, remission of finnes, purgation of conscience, and the like.

(*But the body is in Christ.*) The words are, but the body is of Christ; the meaning is, but Christ is the body of those shadowes, that is, the substance and truth of them, because hee did truly performe and exhibite those things which they shadowed. Thus then briefly conceive wee the words of this verse, as if the Apostle had said:

Which Ceremonies before spoken of, and all other of like sort, are but an obscure resemblance, and being taken by themselves are but an empty shew of Christ to come, and of the mysteries and benefits of Christ: Christ is the substance and truth of them, he truly performing and exhibiting those things which they did prefigure and shadow out.

Now first the argument here used by the Apostle is to be considered in that he reasons thus.

That

That the end and use of legall ceremonies was to shadow out Christ to come: and therefore Christ being now come, there is no more use of them, it plainly reacheth us the abrogation of the use of all significant and shadowing ceremonies of *Moses Law*, that by Christ his coming and death all ceremonies of figure and signification are abrogated and taken away in regard of the use of them.

I say ceremonies of figure and signification (for some were of order, and may be used without binding the conscience to the necessary use of them.) And againe, I say in regard of the use of them: for as those ceremonies are set downe in the Bookes of the old Testament, they are part of the written Word of God, and may still instruct us concerning Christ his coming, suffering death, and the many and great fruites of it: but in regard of the use and observation of them they are quite abrogated, and wee now in time of the Gospell are free from the observation of any Jewish ceremonie, being a figure of Christ to come; yea, now the use and observation of Jewish ceremonies is a thing not arbitrary and left to us as indifferent, but it is utterly unlawfull, and that is plainly taught Hebrewes the ninth throughout, but specially 9, 10, 11, 12, verses: in the 10. verse it is said, that the service of the old Testament *only stood in meates and drinkes, and divers washings, and carnall rites, untill the time of reformation.* When was that time? it is expressed in the verse following, namely, the time of Christ his coming: but Christ being come, an high Priest of good things to come by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is, not of this building: neither by the blood of goates and calves; but by his owne blood entered he in once unto the holy place, and obtained eternall redemption for us. Galath. 5. 2. the Apostle was bold to tell the Galathians, and hee speaks it with authority, setting his owne name before it, that the use of circumcision would prove most dangerous unto them: *Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.*

Acts 16. 3. Paul himselfe circumcised Timothy.

It is true, but the Text saith, it was because of the Jewes, in regard of the weake Jewes, who otherwise would have beene offended.

Why? but if circumcision were utterly unlawfull, then he ought not to have used it for the avoiding of the offence of any.

To this I answer, though circumcision after the death of Christ was a dead ceremonie, yet till the destruction of *Solomons Temple* it was a thing indifferent; it was a ceremony dead, but not buried, and so was it used by the Apostle as a thing indifferent; but after the destruction of the Temple, when the Church of the new Testament was planted, then was it a deadly ceremony utterly unlawfull. And therefore wickedly, and most injuriously deale the Papists, in loading their simple followers with an huge heape of ceremonies, taken partly from the Gentiles, and partly from the Law of *Moses*: their Masse (which they account the marrow of religion) is nothing but a masse of Jewish ceremonies, and therein they lay on mens neckes an intolerable yoke so called, *Acts 15. 10.* yea, therein they shew themselves to be led with the spirit of Antichrist, such a spirit as *Iohn* speaks of, 1 *Ioh. 4. 3.* in effect denying Christ to be come in the flesh. We must remember that we are now set free from the use of Jewish ceremonies, we now are not to worship God in outward sacrifices and ceremonies, but in spirit and truth, even in spirituell worship and service.

The next thing offered unto us from this verse is this, that the Apostle in describing the legall ceremonies, useth this comparison, that they are but shadowes. Hence we are plainly taught thus much.

That the significant ceremonies of the Law were only obscure resemblances, and by themselves but empty shadowes of Christ, and the benefits of Christ.

Doctr. 1.

All significant and shadowing ceremonies of *Moses Law* are taken away by Christs death in regard of the use of them.

Obiect.

Answer.

Objection.

Answer.

Vse.

Discovery of the injurious dealing of the Papists in loading their followers with a masse of ceremonies.

Doctr. 2.

The significant ceremonies of *Moses Law*.

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It is true, but the Text saith, it was because of the Jewes, in regard of the weake Jewes, who otherwise would have beene offended.

Why? but if circumcision were utterly unlawfull, then he ought not to have used it for the avoiding of the offence of any.

To this I answer, though circumcision after the death of Christ was a dead ceremonie, yet till the destruction of *Salomons Temple* it was a thing indifferent, it was a ceremony dead, but not buried, and so was it used by the Apostle as a thing indifferent: but after the destruction of the Temple, when the Church of the new Testament was planted, then was it a deadly ceremonie utterly unlawfull. And therefore wickedly, and most injuriously deale the Papists, in loading their simple followers with an huge heape of ceremonies, taken partly from the Gentiles, and partly from the Law of *Moses*: their Masse (which they account the marrow of religion) is nothing but a masse of Jewish ceremonies, and therein they lay on mens neckes an intolerable yoke so called, *Acts 15. 10.* yea, therein they shew themselves to be led with the spirit of Antichrist, such a spirit as *Iohn* speakes of, 1 Ioh. 4. 3. in effect denying Christ to be come in the flesh. We must remember that we are now set free from the use of Jewish ceremonies, we now are not to worship God in outward sacrifices and ceremonies, but in spirit and truth, even in spirituall worship and service.

The next thing offered unto us from this verse is this, that the Apostle in describing the legall ceremonies, useth this comparison, that they are but shadows. Hence we are plainly taught thus much.

That the significant ceremonies of the Law were only obscure resemblances, and by themselves but empty shadows of Christ, and the benefits of Christ.

Doctr. 1.

All significant and shadowing ceremonies of *Moses Law* are taken away by Christs death in regard of the use of them.

Obiect.

Answer.

Objection.

Answer.

Use.

Discovery of the injurious dealing of the Papists in loading their followers with a masse of ceremonies.

Doctr. 2.

The significant ceremonies of *Moses*.

law were only
obscure re-
semblances
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dowes of Christ
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fits.

Christ was onely shadowed out by them in the time of the old Testament. Christ his grace and benefits were not given by the very sacrifices and ceremonies of the Law, but they that used them were to have an eye to the body of them (namely) Christ. Hence it is that the people of God were often reproved by the Prophets in using of those sacrifices, because they rested in the use of them, as if by the very offering of a sacrifice, their sins had beene taken away: and in their offering they had not an eye to the body, they looked not at the true perfect sacrifice of Christ, whereof those sacrifices were onely a shadow. The Lord therefore saith, chap. 1. vers. 11. 12, 13. *What have I to doe with the multitude of your sacrifices? I am full of the burnt-offerings of rammes and of the fat of fed beasts, and I desire not the blood of Bullockes, nor of Lambes, nor of Goates. When you come to appeare before mee, who required this of your hands to tread in my courts? Bring no more oblations in vaine: Intense is an abomination unto mee: I cannot suffer your new Moones, nor Sabbaths, nor solemne daies (it is iniquity) nor solemne assemblies. What is the reason of it? It is given verse 15. in the end, for your hands are full of blood: as if he had said, When you offer these sacrifices, you rest in your outward service, as if the very offering of it were sufficient to conferre my grace upon you: you looke not by faith to the one true perfect sacrifice, and that is manifest, because you doe not testifie your faith by the fruits of it, you still continue in your finnes, and so your sacrifices are abominable in my sight, I cannot endure them. Hebrewes chap. 10. vers. 1. the holy Ghost saith in plaine termes, that the Law had the shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of things.*

Objection.

Here then comes a question to be handled (namely) this:

What difference there is betweene the Sacraments of the old Testament and our Sacraments of the new Testament: for it may seeme that the Sacraments of the old Testament being abolished, they were but ceremonies, and so but obscure resemblances, and by themselves but empty shewes, and the question may be, how our Sacraments differ from them.

Answer of the
Papists.

The Papists in answer to this question say, that the Sacraments of the old Testament did onely signifie and shadow out grace to be given afterward, by the passion of Christ, but our Sacraments in the new Testament (say they) doe containe grace in them, and give grace, *ex opere operato*, by the very worke done: this is a meere untruth, and a difference devised by themselves. That we therefore may assigne a right difference betweene them, wee must first know that the Sacraments of the old Testament, were both Ceremonies and Sacraments: Ceremonies, as a signe of the Messiah to come, and Sacraments as seales of the righteousness by faith having the Word of promise adjoynd to them: the Lord promising in his Word that by those signes hee would offer, apply, seale up, and confirme grace in the right users of them.

The true an-
swer.

No maine dif-
ference be-
tweene the Sa-
craments of
the old Testa-
ment and our
Sacraments.

Now then for answer to the question: As the Sacraments of the old Testament were ceremonies, so there is a maine difference betweene them and our Sacraments; for so they are onely resemblances of things to come, having no word of promise annexed unto them as our Sacraments have: but as they were Sacraments; so there is no essentiall difference betweene them and our Sacraments: they did signifie and seale up the same grace and righteousness to salvation and life eternall, that ours doe: therefore the Apostle calls circumcision the seale of the righteousness of the faith, which Abraham had when hee was circumcised, Rom. 4. 11. 1 Corinth. 10. 3. 4. hee saith, that the fathers in the old Testament did eate the same spirituall meate, and did drinke the same spirituall drinke, for they dranke of the same spirituall rocke, that wee doe in our Sacraments (namely) Christ: and so in substance there is no difference betweene their Sacraments and ours: yet know, that the Sacraments of the old Testament and ours differ, and that in three things.

First,

First, in outward signes and rites.

Secondly, the Sacraments of the old Testament did foreshew Christ to come.

Ours are visible declarations of Christ already come.

Thirdly, our Sacraments doe more plainly and fully set Christ and his death before us than did theirs.

For as in the new Testament, the meanes of revelation is more cleere, the light of faith greater, and the measure of grace more ample: so also by the Sacraments of the new Testament is the grace of Christ more plainly and fully and plentifully offered and used than by the Sacraments of the old Testament.

Now thus we are to consider: Is it so, that the grace of Christ, is not now set before us in obscure shadows, as it was before his coming in the flesh? Is it now more fully and plainly and plentifully offered unto us in the preaching of the Gospell, and administration of the Sacraments?

Then let it shame us to be behinde them of the old Testament in knowledge, in faith, and in sound and comfortable apprehension and application of the grace of Christ.

Herein many are much defective, many have no understanding of the grace of Christ, so plainly set before them in the Sacraments, as if Christ were yet in crucifying, and as if his blood were now dropping from his body in their sight: yet many that come to the Lords Table, see it not, nor have any apprehension of the grace that is offered. And what is the cause? Surely, that is one cause which our Saviour hath given, Ioh. 3. 19. wee love shadows rather than the substance, wee are so wedded to the vanishing pleasure and fading profits of this world, which are but shadows that wee cannot see, much lesse affect the true substance of grace in Christ.

Well let us remember what our Saviour saith in that place, this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darknesse rather than light: so certainly wee may justly feare, that this will be to our deeper condemnation, that the truth and substance of the old shadows is come into the world, and yet we rather love the shadows of pleasure and worldly profits than this enduring substance: therefore our judgement and condemnation shall be the greater.

One thing more wee may hence gather, in that the Apostle saith, that Christ in respect of the legall ceremonies, is the truth and substance of them, wee may conclude that all sacrifices propitiatory are now ended in Christ, they are now needlesse, yea, they are pernicious, because Christ his perfect sacrifice is succeeded in stead of all legall sacrifices, they being weak and insufficient to take away sinne, Christ by his one offering hath made perfect them that are sanctified, so saith the Author to the Hebrewes, Hebr. 10. 14. and this discovereth to us, that the popish sacrifice of the masse (which the Papists hold to be a propitiatory sacrifice for the quicke and dead) is a most abominable idoll: they please themselves in the shadow when they may have the true substance: for they teach that Christ is still offered under the formes of Bread and Wine, after an unbloody manner, which is a most grosse, senselesse, and dangerous heresie.

Let us remember that Christ his sacrifice on the crosse, was the complement, substance and truth of all the old sacrifices, and so all expiatory sacrifices are ended in that: and let us by faith only cleave to the infinite and eternall merit of that one perfect sacrifice, as the only propitiation for all our finnes, and then wee shall be sure to finde remission of finnes, peace with God in this life, an eternall comfort with him in the life to come.

The Sacraments of the old Testament and ours differ further in three things.

Vse.

It is a shame for us to be behind them that lived in time of the old Testament in knowledge, in faith, and in sound receiving of the grace of Christ.

Doct. 3.

All sacrifices propitiatory are now ended in Christ.

Vse. 1.

The sacrifice of the masse is a most abominable Idoll.

Vse 2.

Wee are to cleave by faith to the infinite and eternall merit of Christ his sacrifice on the crosse.

Verf. 18. *Let no man at his pleasure beare rule over you, by humbleness of minde, and worshipping of Angells, advancing himselfe in those things, which he never saw, rashly puffe up with his fleshly minde.*

The generall
matter of this
verse.

The manner of
delivering of
that matter.

IN this verse the Apostle comes to deale against the corruption of Religion and meanes of seducement, and drawing away from the truth teache from philosophy, and the vaine speculation of certaine Earthusiasts, that is, such as pretended heavenly visions and revelations, and he doth insist in one particular, which such false teachers laboured to thrust on the Colossians, namely, the Religion or worship of Angells. Now the Apostles manner of dealing against this, is as it was before, verse 16. (namely) by way of dehortation, that the Colossians should not suffer any to corrupt them with the religion or worship of Angells, that is the generall matter of this verse.

In the manner of delivering of it more specially, two things are offered to our consideration.

First, a dissuasion from suffering false teachers to draw them away to the worship of Angells.

Secondly, a description of such false teachers.

And in both these, are couched and contained arguments of refutation to repell that false doctrine of the worship of Angells.

The dissuasion is in these words [*Let no man at his pleasure beare rule over you by humbleness of minde and worshipping of Angells*] wherein is laid before us.

1

First, this generall, *Let no man rule over you*, or, *let no man defraud you*: with the manner, how false teachers sought to beare rule over the Colossians, (namely) after their owne will and pleasure.

2

Secondly, the particular thing whereby false teachers would beare rule over them, and defraud them: and that was the worship of Angells, which is amplified by the meanes used to perswade thereunto, namely, *humbleness of minde* (by humbleness of minde) for so (as I take it) those two things are to be conceived and distinguished in the purpose of the Apostle.

That the one was the thing whereby false teachers laboured to beare rule over the Colossians.

And the other, the meanes used to perswade them unto it.

The description of false teachers, what they were, is in the words following. [*Advancing himselfe in those things which he never saw.*]

1

First, they are described by their boldnesse, that they durst boldly take on them the knowledge and determination of things they had never scene. (*Advancing himselfe in those things which he never saw.*)

2

Secondly, by the roote and efficient cause of that (namely) the vaine pride of their carnall mindes in the last words, [*rashly puffe up with fleshly minde.*]

Now the arguments included in this dissuasion and description to repell the false doctrine of the worship of Angells, are especially these two.

First, that such worship is most dangerous, if they should embrace it, it would be a meanes to draw them from Christ, to defraud them of their price, and to bring them into thrall and bondage to the corrupt wills of men.

Secondly, that such worship is not built on any good ground, but thrust out from the vaine speculation of men, taking on them the knowledge of things they never saw, and that through the vaine pride of their owne fleshly mindes.

Come we to the words of this verse, and first, of the dissuasion (*Let no man at his pleasure beare rule over you, by humbleness of minde, and worshipping of Angells.*) We finde but one word in the original, here translated (*beare rule over you*) and for the understanding of it, we must know that the Heathen in their games and publike exercises of wrestling, and the like, had some that used to

[sic]

Interpre-
tation

fit as Vmpires, to give them that did best, the reward of a Garland, a Crowne, or some such thing. Now the word here used is metaphorical, and it is taken from the corrupt and unjust dealing of such Vmpires, who no doubt sometimes defrauded them of the price that deserved it. From such unjust dealing of such Vmpires is the word here borrowed, and it signifieth after the manner of unjust Vmpires to defraud men of the price that is due to them: the meaning is, to draw them from Christ, and so to defraud them of eternall life and salvation, due unto them; in, and thorow Him [at his pleasure] that is, according to his owne lust, without any reason at all. [by humblenesse of minde] the meaning of it is not, by true humblenesse of minde, for that is an excellent grace and vertue, but by a counterfeit shew of it, under a colour of humblenesse of minde: [and worshipping of Angells] the wordes are religion of Angells: and the meaning is, by religious adoration, or invocation of Angells. Thus then we are to conceive the meaning of this dissuasion: Let no man (according to the lust of his owne heart, without any ground at all) by his false opinions draw you from Christ, and defraud you of the price of eternall life due to you in him: and that by perswading you (under a colour of humblenesse of minde) to the invocation and worship of Angells.

Now first, observe wee here that the Apostle was not content with his former dissuasion, vers. 16. *Let no man therefore condemne you in meate and drinke, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new Moone, or of the Sabbath daies:* but hee subjoyne this to be needfull also, *Let no man at his pleasure beare rule over you by humblenesse of minde and worshipping of Angells:* thereby giving us to understand, that false teachers used not one kinde of imposture to draw the Colossians from the truth, but one while they urged circumcision, and the observation of legall ceremonies to be needfull to salvation; another while they magnified Angells, and (under a colour of humblenesse of minde) sought to bring in the worship of Angells.

Hence wee may easily take up this conclusion: that Satan hath many faire coloured meanes to corrupt religion; if hee cannot by one frailty prevaile to overthrow or corrupt the true faith of Christians, he can, and will use another; and if that succeed not, a third; yea, an infinite number of sleights to that purpose: *hee is the Dragon with seven heads*, Revel. 12. 3. that is, having the fullnesse of all subtilty and craft.

And this I note, to teach us to arme our selves not onely against one or two, but against many subtilties of Satan used to draw us away from the truth. Wee must not onely be armed against the coloured craft and subtilty of the Papists, labouring to corrupt us with a shew of Scripture, by addition, detraction, or some absurd grosse, interpreted, by glorious titles of unity, and universality, by lying signes and wonders, and such like; but we must be provided to withstand the sleight of such as seeme to have the truth; and yet under the colour of a constitution of a Church, goe about to undermine the whole building of sound faith and religion: yea, let us be circumspect, and arme our selves against the subtilty of Satan, under the shew of great knowledge, and profound learning, tending to unsound points of doctrine, and dangerous errors. Some there be that in this respect are deluded and much deceived; let them remember what they read, Revel. 2. 24. profundity and depth of learning abused to broach error, is the very deepnesse of Satan. Let us therefore arme our selves against it, and against all the subtilties: and that we doe this, let us receive the truth in love of the truth, and testifie our love by bringing forth the fruits of it, and then no doubt wee shall have the secret of the Lord revealed unto us; as it is said, Psal. 25. 14. We shall be able to discern betweene truth and error, and spy out the subtilty of Satan going about to deceive us.

The next thing wee are to observe in this dissuasion is, that the Apostle saith

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it is a very
unjust dealing
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The meaning
is, to draw

Do 7. 1.
Satan hath many
faire coloured
meanes to corrupt
Religion.

We must arme
our selves
against many
subtilties used
by Satan, to
draw us from
the truth of
Religion.

Doff. 2.
It is a very dangerous thing to be drawne away to any fundamentall error. The Doctrine explained.

not, Let no man seduce you by bearing rule over you by humblenesse of minde, and worshipping of Angells; but he sets out such seducement with the danger of it, that it is like to proove a defrauding of them of the price of eternall life, Let no man defraud you of the price of eternall life and salvation due unto you, in, and through Christ.

Hence wee are taught how dangerous a thing it is to be seduced and drawne away to any fundamentall error, such as is the invocation and worship of Angels. Men that are so seduced, are in danger thereby to lose eternall life. And that this doctrine be not mistaken, I must of necessity a little further explaine it.

First therefore, I say it is dangerous to be drawne away to such an error as is against the foundation, and doth overturne the truth necessary to be believed to salvation, as the unity of the God-head, the unity of persons, that Jesus Christ is the onely Saviour of all Gods chosen, that we are redeemed by him, that we are justified in the sight of God by faith, without workes, and such like.

Secondly, I say not, that such an one as is seduced and drawne away, shall never come to life and salvation, but that he is in danger to lose eternall life: for haply he may be drawne and fall into the error of weakenesse and ignorance. It was the case of the Galatians, Gal. 1. 6. *I marvel! that ye are so soone removed away unto another Gospel, from him that had called you in the grace of Christ:* and he may continue in it ignorantly for a time, and afterward repent and be saved.

Thus then conceive we the doctrine, that he that is drawne away to any error, overturning the truth necessary to be knowne and believed to salvation, is in great danger to lose eternall life, and to be damned for ever: for he may come to hold that error obstinately to the end, and then he shuts himselfe out from all possibilitie of salvation. The Apostle saith, Galat. 5. 4. *Ye are abolished from Christ, whosoever are justified by the Law, ye are false from grace.* The meaning is, you that are of that erroneous opinion, and hold it stiffely, that you are justified by the Law, you are abolished from Christ, Christ is to you an empty and unprofitable Christ; and then as Saint Iohn saith, 1 Joh. 5. 12. *He that hath not the Son of God, hath not life,* he cannot come to be saved.

Use 1.
Information of judgement touching erroneous opinions held by some.

And this may serve to informe our understandings in this point, that all erroneous opinions are not damnable: the Apostles themselves for some time, even till Christ was ascended into heaven, held an error touching the establishment of the kingdome of Israel by their Lord and Master, Act. 1. 5. yet were they, even then, in the state of grace & salvation, because they rested on Christ, as the onely Saviour of the world, who should take away their sins, and bring them to everlasting life: as appeareth, Ioh. 6. 68, 69. And therefore it is not every erroneous opinion that is damnable, but onely such as doth overturne some fundamentall truth necessarie to be held to salvation, and that held with obstinacie to the end, that shuts a man out from all hope of salvation.

Use 2.
Wee are to be ware of such as would have us yeeld though but a little, to some fundamentall error.

Againe, is it so that seducement and drawing away into some fundamentall error is so dangerous? Is it the hazard of our owne salvation? then let us take heed how wee give place to them that are tempering with us to yeeld, though never so little, to some fundamentall error: as to hold justification in the sight of God, partly by faith, and partly by workes. Let us doe in this case as the Apostle saith, he did in the like, Gal. 2. 5. *Give no place to them by subjection not for an houre, no not for one minute:* if we doe, we bring our selves in danger to lose eternall life. It is thought by some, there may be a little yeelding to the Papists in fundamentall points of religion, and so an union and mixture may be made of their religion and ours; which is a meere dreame of carnall Gospelers, and worldly politicians: we must not yeeld from the least part of truth revealed necessarie to salvation; our yeelding never so little from such a truth is most dangerous: the Lord may give us up to goe on from one degree of error

to another, till we come to hold a lie in the right hand, that is, with obstinacy to continue in it, and so be damned. Let us therefore take heed of yeelding any jot from a fundamentall truth, let us hold that more precious than the whole world.

Mirke wee further, the Apostle saith, Let no man here rule over you at his pleasure, according to his owne corrupt lust, without any reason at all. See then the fearefull thraldome of such as are seduced by false teachers; they beare rule over them at their pleasure, they leade them whither they list. I shewed when I stood on the 8. verse, that false teachers carry away the simple as a prey, and use them at their pleasure: the Apostle hath made it manifest, 2 Cor. chap. 11. verse 20. where hee saith, *The Corinthians suffered false teachers to use them at their pleasure.* Having handled that point, I will not now stand upon it, nor now remember the use was made of it: but consider wee the truth of this in another kinde. As false teachers leade the simple into error, and hold them in it at their pleasure: even thus doe many wicked instruments of sinne, such as are meanes to draw others to sinne, and to leade them to lust and lewdnesse, to riot and unthrifty courses; doe not they leade them at their pleasure and hold them in sinne as they list? Looke on the example of *Abab*, 1 King. 21. 25. It is there said, *Hee sold himselfe to worke wickednesse in the sight of the Lord,* and that *Iezabel his wife provoked him*: hee was a slave to sinne at the provocation of *Iezabel his wife*.

Looke againe, Pro. 7. 22. the whorish woman having enticed the wanton young man destitute of understanding, it is said, *He followed her straight waies as an ox that goeth to the slaughter, and as a foole to the stocks for correction.* And not to seeke farre for examples; are there not many in the world that are slaves to wicked instruments of sinne, even to such as leade them to drunkennesse, filthinesse, and many lewd courses; are they not ready to attend them at their becke, and at their call to goe whither they list to leade them? yea, are they not ready to goe with them when they will have them; sometimes (which is able to make any honest heart to bleed) from the Church to the Taverne: are there not such in the world? it is too evident there be too many. Well, my speech tends to this purpose; to let such as are led by others know, and see in what a miserable thraldome they are: they will say sometimes when they are dealt withall to put up any injury or wrong, they will not be made fooles for any mans pleasure; such an one shall not use them at his pleasure, and they put it up and say nothing, and yet they can be content that the Divell and his instruments should leade them to lewdnesse and sin at their pleasure; yea, to be held in the snare of the Divell at his will and pleasure, 2 Tim. 2. 26.

Learn whosoever thou art, that art thus led by wicked instruments of Satan, to see and consider thy bondage, that thou art in miserable thraldome, and seeing it, to use all good meanes to hasten out of it; and for such as are a meanes to draw others to sinne: I say no more but this. That as they are the Divells factors; so without great repentance they shal one day be his partners, and their portion shall be with him that was the first enticer to sinne, that is, the Divell and his Angells, in the bottomlesse pit of hell.

One thing more is offered to our consideration, from the forme of speech here used [*Let no man defraud you of your price*] It should have beene spoken of before, but it will not be amisse now to remember it. It is this: in that the Apostle saith, *Let no man defraud you of your price*; meaning by the word [*price*] eternall life and salvation, in, and through Christ.

Hence it is evident and plaine, that eternall life is proposed and set before us as a price: it is made knowne to us in the Scripture, to be as a garland, or a crowne that is wont to be given to such as run well in a race, or such as wrestle well, or the like, 1 Cor. 9. 24. *They which run in a race, run all, yet one receiveth the price*: forrunne that yet may obtaine: meaning the price of eternall life: and

verf.

Doctr. 3.

Such as are misled by others, either into errors, or sinne: are held by them in a miserable thraldome. Proove of the first.

Proove of the second.

They that are led by others to sinne, must take notice of their bondage, and hasten out of it.

Doctr. 4.
Eternall life is set before us in the Scripture as a price.

verf. 25 he faith, *but we for an incorruptible crowne*: that is, for an incorruptible crowne of life and falvation, Phil. 3. 14. faith the Apostle, *I followed hard toward the mark, for the price of the high calling of God in Iefus Chrift*: that is, to that heavenly glory, to which God calls all his elect in Chrift.

Reason.

Now the reason why Eternall life is thus resembled to a price, or a crowne, is not (as the Papists teach) because it is deserved, but because it is given as a reward after we are come to the end of our race, after wee have runne the race that is set before us in this life, keeping faith and a good conscience, and have finished our course in holinesse and the feare of God, then is the crowne of life and glory given: and in that respect it is said to be a price, or a crowne, as the Apostle shewes plainly, 1 Tim. 4. 7. *I have fought a good fight, and have finished my course, I have kept the faith*: and then in the 8. verse he subjoynes, *henceforth is laid up for me the crowne of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Iudge shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing*: he faith not, therefore I have deserved the crowne of righteousness, but that the Lord the righteous Iudge shall give it to him at that day.

Objection.

Oh, but faith the Papists, it is called a crowne of righteousness, it is given by a righteous Iudge (for these two words they stand on in that verse) therefore it is justly deserved.

Answer.

I answer them, it is called a crowne of righteousness, because it is indeede the reward of true believers, even of such as are just and righteous in Chrift, bringing forth the fruites of righteousness. And it is said to be given by a righteous Iudge, because it is given by God, who is just in performing his promise: for hee hath freely promised to all such as are in Chrift, and bring forth good fruites of holinesse and righteousness, the reward of eternall life. And in performing this promise of his, hee is here said to be just: and so the meaning of the Apostle in the generall sentence comprehended in the words of that verse, is this. That the Lord doth crowne true believers, bringing forth the fruites of holinesse and righteousness with the reward of eternall life, and that justly: or as a just Iudge; not in regard of the merit of those workes, but in respect of his owne free promise in Chrift, having bound himselfe by his promise to give them the reward of eternall life, he is just in performance of the same.

Use. 1.
In doing good duties we may lawfully respect the promised reward.

A Popish slander.

How in doing good we may have respect to the recompence of reward.

Use. 2.
Wee are ever to have our

Wee see it then made cleere, that eternall life is proposed and set before us as a price.

And this being so, hence it followeth, that we may lawfully have respect unto it in doing good, it is warrantable by the Word of God to have an eye upon the promised reward in performance of good duties: for if it be lawfull to abstaine from sinne for feare of eternall punishment in hell [*as it is*] wee are so taught, Math. 10. 28. then it is also lawfull to doe good, with respect of eternall reward. The Papists they charge us to teach that men may not doe good with respect to any reward; but they slander us, it is our constant doctrine: that we may yet understand this doctrine aright, we may in doing good, have respect unto the recompence of reward, so as wee doe it not onely or principally in that respect: in doing good we are chiefly to minde and respect Gods glory, and the discharge of our duty; and in the second place we may looke for the promised reward.

To minde the recompence of reward onely or principally is the property of a mercenary hireling, and proceeds from selfe-love. In the duties of Religion or love to all men, Wee are to looke first and principally after Gods glory, and the discharge of a good conscience in doing our duty; and then wee may lawfully have an inferiour and secondary respect to the recompence of reward.

Againe, is eternall life proposed and set before us as a price, or as a crowne to be given after we are come to the end of our race? then our duty is ever to have our

our eye upon it, wee are ever to fixe our eyes upon it. I meane, the eyes of our mindes upon the crowne of glory and blisse that is prepared for all them that love the appearance of Christ. And this is a duty of excellent use; it will make us runne (with patience and comfort) the race that is set before us, and make us hold out and persevere in the feare of God, amidst the troubles and miseries of this life: yea, in the midst of many violent assaults and tentations of Satan. It is said, Hebr. 11. 26. *That Moses esteemed the rebuke of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt:* and what was the reason? because (saith the Text) *he had respect unto the recompence of reward:* and Heb. 12. 2. it is said, *that Christ himselfe endured the Crosse, and despised the shame, and is set at the right hand of the throne of God:* and why? for the joy that was set before him: so certainly, such as are the members of Christ, looking up to the joy and glory that after a while they shall enjoy, it will make them endure with patience any crosse, and despise and set light by any shame that the world can throw upon them. Though the mouthes of wicked men be opened wide against them, and load them with many opprobrious speeches, yet will not they be mooved, but esteeme them as the speeches of idle lookers on, and give them leave to speake, and still hold on their holy course, with a right foot in the race towards heaven. Let us therefore ever remember to lift up the eyes of our minde, and fasten them on that glory that hereafter shall be revealed. This duty was never more needfull to be often urged than now in these daies, wherein the greatest part have their mindes groveling and poring on the things of this world, and have no view (no not so much as a glimpse) of that eternall waight of glory that shall be revealed; yea, even such as professe Religion and the feare of God, begin to cast their eyes aside, and to looke with too much delight on the things of this world, and to minde earthly things too much. Well, let such (as with Demas embrace this present world, and are ever poring on the things of it) know that it is a thousand to one, that the sight of eternall glory shall then faile them, when they have most neede of comfort by it, even in the day of death, and in the houre of tentation: they may then haply seeke for the sight of it, and not finde it; but instead of it, have the sight of the torments of hell to be ready for to seaze upon them.

Let such also as feare God, and begin to looke aside on the things of this world know, it will be hard even for them to hold out in faith, and in the feare of God in time of triall. Remember the example of David, hee was a man that had spent much time in travelling towards heaven; yet looking but a little aside upon the glittering shew of this world, had very neere lost his way, his feet were almost gone, *his steps had well nigh slipped*, Psalm. 37. 2.

Let us therefore be stirred up ever to keepe our eyes fixed on the marke, and to looke to the price of eternall life, that we may be able to run the race (that is set before us) with patience and comfort, and hold out in faith, and in the feare of God, in the greatest triall and tentation, yea, in the very point of death: we know not how soone the Lord may bring us into the triall.

The next thing we are led to consider (by the order of this dissuasion) is the meane that false teachers use to perswade to the worship of Angels, which was the counterfeit shew and colour of humility (for so we expounded those words, *by humbleness of minde*) which may be further explained thus:

That false teachers used both an hypocritical shew of humility in themselves, in their speeches and behaviour: and used also a coloured argument taken from humility, to perswade to the worship of Angels.

I will onely note one thing: from hence we shall have more fit occasion to speake of counterfeit humility, verse 23.

Hence thence observe we, that it is an ancient practice of Satan, under the colour of vertue, to draw men to sinne: he laboured to draw the Colossians to the worship of Angels, under a shew of humility, by arguing and reasoning from humility:

eye fixed upon
the crowne of
glory in doing
good duties.

Doff. 5.
It is an old
practice of Sa-
tan, under co-
lour of vertue,
to draw men
to sinne.

humility, no doubt, after this or the like manner; the Maiesty of God is most holy and most glorious; and therefore we being dust and ashes, sinfull creatures, ought not to approach unto him, or crave any thing at his hands immediately, without the intercession of some that are more pure and neerer to God, and may prevaile more with him than we our selves, and such be the Angels; therefore make them your spokes-men, and intercessors to God for you. Thus (in all likelihood) they laboured to perswade the Colossians to the worship of Angels. Thus doe the Papists at this day: Oh, say they, it is boldnesse and presumption in you to goe to God in prayer; be humble, goe to God by meanes of Saints and Angels. I note this in a word to this purpose:

Vse.

It is not alwaies lawfull that is rendred unto us under the colour of good.

Objection.
Answer.

To let us see that it is not alwaies lawfull that comes to us under the colour of good, but sometimes it is wicked and sinfull. For example: to consult with a Witch, a Sorcerer or Charmer, is a thing tendred by the Divell, under the colour of much good, and no harme at all in it: as forsooth, it is good to have things that are lost againe, and to be cured of a disease, and it is done by good words, and good prayers, and the like.

Thus doth the Divell delude many in the world, and thrust on them that which is wicked and sinfull, under a semblance and shew of great good.

But are not the words of Scripture good, will some say?

Yes they are, but being perverted and used to that end the Lord never appointed it: they become evill, yea, the divells words to them that so use them.

What better words can there be, than such as expresse the praise of God; yet such words may be wicked, being abused, 1 Sam. 23. 21. It was *Sauls* sin, when the Ziphims (to curry favour with him) came to betray *David* to him, and to discover where he was, that *Saul* might take him; hee breakes out into praise and thanksgiving to God, for that their wickednesse, and faith; *he yet blessed, or blessed be God for you*; a most wicked thing was it in *Saul* thus to praise God, yet were his words good.

Let not then the Divell delude us, and under the colour of good, draw us to evill: though the words be good, yea, the words of the Scripture, and though the prayer be the Lords Prayer; yet being used to effect that for which there is no reason, either in nature, or in the Word of God, they become evill; and though the Lord doe suffer things to be done by such meanes; yet let us know it is in iudgement, and for a greater plague: men thereby come to prosper in sinne, and their heart are made more hard and incurable.

Come wee to the thing that false teachers laboured to thrust on the Colossians, which was the worship of Angels.

Hence we are taught, that the worship of Angells is utterly unlawfull. And that wee mistake not the point, wee must know that there is reverence due to the good Angells, namely a reverence of love, not of service; religious worship and service is only due to God, not to any creature, Saint or Angell; therefore the Angell forbids *Iohn* to worship him, and bids him worship God, Revel. 19. 10. The Papists, they give divine honour and adoration to the Angells; yea, they hold it lawfull to direct their prayers unto them, and to make them intercessors betweene God and them, which is a wicked superstition here condemned by the Apostle: we are to renounce it, and to hold us only to the mediation and intercession of Iesus Christ, and in him alone offer up our prayers to God, and not in the name of any other.

And to strengthen us in this truth, that in the mediation of Christ alone, wee are to offer up our prayers to God: consider briefly these reasons.

First we reade, 1 Tim. chap. 2. vers. 5. that Christ is the onely Mediator betweene God and man; and therefore in his name onely are wee to pray unto God.

The Papists say, Christ indeed is the onely Mediator of Redemption, but Angells

Dott. 6.

The worship of Angells is utterly unlawfull. The Doctrine explained.

Vse.

It is a wicked superstition to make Angells intercessors between God and us, as the Papists doe.

Reasons proving the mediation of Christ alone.

Angells and Saints are Mediatours of intercession: which distinction is flat against the plaine evidence of Scriptures.

We are taught, Hebr. 7. 24. that Christ his Priesthood is everlasting, and one part of honour belonging to his Priesthood, is to make intercession, as followeth, verse 25. and Rom. 8. 34. the Apostle saith in plaine words, *that Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, to make request for us*: therefore this distinction cannot stand with the truth of Gods Word.

Secondly, he onely must be our Mediatour betweene God and us, who is able not onely to remove sinne, death, and damnation, but to procure righteousness, life, and the favour of God: for we are taught to come to God, not as to a Judge, but as to a Father, and to say, Our Father, &c. But Christ only doth this, he onely doth reconcile us to God, and procure unto us righteousness, life, and the favour of God: in him onely we come to be the adopted sonnes and daughters of God: all the Angells in heaven are not able to procure that God should be a father unto us. Therefore in Christ his name onely are we to pray unto God.

Lastly, we are commanded to pray unto God in the name of Christ, and we have promise to be heard, praying only in his name: therefore in his name alone are we to pray unto God.

Other reasons might be added: but these, I hope, may suffice to confirme us in this truth. I will briefly answer a doubt that perhaps may arise in the mindes of some.

It may seeme, that not onely Christ, but the holy Ghost also is an intercessour betweene God and us. Rom. 8. 26. 27. the Apostle saith, *The Spirit maketh request for the Saints, according to the will of God*.

To this I answer, that the meaning of the Apostle is, that the Spirit of God doth breathe into our hearts such motions whereby wee call on God earnestly, even with sighes and groanes which cannot be expressed: for we must not thinke that the Spirit doth sigh, but doth inspire into us such motions whereby we call on God, with sighes and groanes.

Again, wee are to marke, verse the 27. It is said that *the Spirit maketh request for the Saints according to the will of God*: the meaning is, he teacheth men to pray according to Gods will; he teacheth both what, and how to pray, and so this doubt is cleared.

Come we to the description of false teachers, what they were.

And first, they are described by their boldnes, that they durst boldly take on them the knowledge of things which they had never seene, expressed in these words, *Advancing himselfe in those things which he never saw*.

Secondly by the root of that (namely) the vaile pride of their carnall mindes, in the last words (*rashly puffing up with his fleshy minde*).

For the first of these, I will first cleare the words: the word translated (*advancing*) doth properly signifie boldly setting his foot upon another mans possession: without all right and title, thrusting himselfe into the possession of that belongs not unto him: the meaning is after the manner of an intruder, thrusting himselfe into the knowledge, or taking on him the knowledge and determination. (*in those things which he never saw*) that is, those things hee never saw with the eye of his body, nor yet by the eye of faith, for faith is of things not seen by the eye of the body, Heb. 11. 1. Our Saviour saith to Thomas, Joh. 20. 29. *Blessed are they that have not seene, and have believed*: yet is faith of things revealed and made knowne in the written Word of God: and so the Apostles meaning, in saying (*in those things which he never saw*) is, in those things hee never saw, either by the eye of his body, or by the eye of faith.

Thus then we are to conceive these words, as if the Apostle had said: As an intruder, boldly thrusting himselfe into the knowledge, and taking on him the

H h

know-

Object.

Answ.

Interpretation.

knowledge of things he never saw, either by the eye of the body, or by the eye of faith, made knowne in the written Word of God, even of things whereof he hath no testimony, either from experience, or from Scripture, but are such as are either devised by himselfe, or had by some phantasticall relation.

I might here stand to shew, that the worship of Angels is a thing meereley devised, and a thing invented and thrust out from the vaine wit of some men, who tooke on them to know things concerning the Angels, for which they had no warrant, either from experience, or from the Word of God: but I hold it not needfull to stand on that point, I will rather speake of the generall conclusion offered from this part of the description of false teachers, that they were such as did adventure themselves in things they never saw.

Hence we are given to understand thus much, that it is the property of a false teacher, to take on him the knowledge of things, not seene, nor revealed unto him. A false teacher will not stick boldy and confidently to averre things hee never saw, nor learned out of the written Word of God, he is such an one as the Lord speakes of Ezek. 13. 3. *that followeth his owne spirit, and hath seene nothing*: that is, hath had nothing revealed to him from the Lord.

It were easie to give instance of many examples of old: but not to stand long on this, the teachers among the Papists at this day, doe sufficiently cleare this to be a truth: they dare take on them the knowledge of many things not revealed: as of the order of the heavenly Angels, they dare boldly tell you there is an hierarchie of the Angels in heaven, and there be such and such orders of them, they dare take on them to know and determine what severall roomes, what distinct places there be in Hell, as that there is besides the place of the damned, *Limbus patrum*, and *Limbus infantum*, and *Purgatory*, and I know not what. And these, and the like, they avouch with great boldnesse, as if they had seene them with their eyes; and yet are they never able to prove them by any witness or by any testimony of Scripture.

See then, and consider, how farre men goe, when it pleaseth God to give them up to error, they runne to a fearefull height, even to avouch with boldnesse, that which they cannot warrant, either from their owne experience, or from the written Word of God.

And by this also take knowledge of it, that not onely they are led with a spirit of error, who rest on idle visions and dreames, as doe the giddie headed Monkes among the Papists, but also the swelling Enthusiasts, such as pretend private illumination of the spirit, such as take on them the knowledge of some things without the Word, by private illumination: they also are carried with a spirit of error, and wee are to avoid them as deceivers. *Isai. 8. 20.* To the law and to the testimony, saith the Lord: and if men speake not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Let them therefore pretend, what light, what knowledge, or illumination they will, yet if it be not according to the written Word of God, it is no true light and illumination, but a divellish Satanicall illumination, and if any such be tempering with us, wee are to avoid them as deceivers.

In the next place, in that the Apostle doth thus describe a false teacher, and take him to be one that doth advance himselfe, and take on him the knowledge of things he never saw.

Wee may easily gather, that it is a fault to thrust our selves into the knowledge of things not revealed: and curiosity is to be avoided, which is a bold seeking, and looking into things not revealed, either in the word, or by any event: that is, to presume to understand above that which is meete, contrary to the rule of the Apostle, *Rom. 12. 3.* *Let no man presume to understand above what is meete to understand, but let him understand according to sobriety.* Yea, that is to take on us to rush on into Gods closet, and to let foote as it were

Dott. 7.

It is the property of a false teacher to take upon him the knowledge of things not revealed unto him.

The boldnesse of the Papists.

Vse. 1.

Men goe farre in error when God gives them up unto it.

Vse 2.

They are led with a spirit of error who rest in idle visions and dreames or private illumination of the Spirit.

Dott. 4.

It is a fault to thrust our selves into the knowledge of things not revealed.

were into his *Seuerall*, even to thrust our selves into the knowledge of his secret will, which he hath hedged in, and kept *seuerall* to himselfe and will not have us thrust our selves into the searching of it, Deut. 29. 29. The secret things belong to the Lord our God, they are his peculiar; but the things revealed belong to us, and to our children for ever. It was the fault of the Apostle, Act. 1. 6. When they would needs know, whether he would at that time restore the kingdome of Israel, they received answer with a checke: it is not for you to know the times, or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his owne power. When Peter asked, Lord, what shall this man doe? Job. 21. 21. he was answered with a short reproofe, verse 22. If I will that he carry till I come, what is that to thee? meddle not thou with that.

Let us then take knowledge of it, that it is a fault to be too curious in searching that which God hath never revealed: as to question what God did before he made the world, where hell is, and what parts are in hell, and the like: yea, it is a fault to thrust our selves into such things as breed questions, rather than godly edifying, the Apostle condemnes it, 1 Tim. 1. 4. Give not heed to fables and genealogies which are endlesse, and breed questions, rather than godly edifying which is by faith. We are to avoyd curious meddling, even with such things as may breed idle and unprofitable questions: (a thing too common in these daies.) Many men to make shew of their knowledge, take delight to rush into such matters as may breed questions, and such questions as tend not to build them up in love out of a pure heart, (which is lawfull and commendable) but to value jangling (as the Apostle speaks) even to quarrell and contention about names and titles, and things of no moment: and so the Lord many times in his just Judgement gives up such persons to the vanity of their mindes, and suffers them to joyne hands with the Brownists, Familists, or some other schisme, and in the end, they come to this, that it may be truly said of them, which the Apostle said of some in his time, 1 Tim. 1. 7. They would be Doctors of Law, and yet understand not what they speak, neither whereof they affirme: they would make the world believe they know more than other men, and see further into matters than others, and yet understand not what they speake and what they affirme. Well, let us labour by all good meanes to know matters of faith and good conscience. (I speake not against diligent searchers into the Word of God,) but let us avoyd all matter of curious and needlesse questions, and if wee will needes be quicksighted and searching: let us be so in regard of our owne finnes and corruptions to finde them out, *for who can understand his fault*, Psalm. 19. 12. and let us be so in regard of the sleights of our spirituall enemies, that we may finde out the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the divell: here is indeed matter of search and equity, and herein we shall finde matter enough to busie our heads, to exercise our wits, and to spend the best reach of our understandings upon.

Before I leave this point, I thinke it needfull to remove an imputation that is throwne upon us by the Papists: they bend the force of this doctrine against us in this manner: say they, you may be iustly charged to be such as thrust your selves into the knowledge of things not revealed. Why so? because, say they, you take on you unfallibly to know that you are in the number of Gods chosen, and such as shall be saved: this (say they) is presumption, this is to advance your selves, in things you never saw, yea, this is to step up into heaven and to make your selves of Gods privie Councell, because you have no speciall word nor revelation for it, as Paul and some speciall men had, and therefore Paul might say, Rom. 8. 38. *I am perswaded that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Iesus our Lord.*

H h 2

Answer.

Vjs

Reproofe of such as curiously search into things not revealed, and thrust themselves into things breeding questions rather than godly edifying.

Wherein we are to be quick-sighted and searching.

An imputation abrowne upon us by the Papists, removed.

Objection.

Answer

Answer. Though the word doe not say to me, or thee, by name, believe thou *Iohn*, or thou *Peter*, and thou shalt be saved; yet it saith, *Whoever believeth in the Sonne of God shall not perish, but have everlasting life*, Ioh. chap. 3. verse. 16. Now, who is so simple that knowes not the generall doth comprehend the speciall, especially when there is a word of command to apply, and the Minister standing in the roome of Christ as his Ambassadour, 2 Cor. 5. 20. to assure as many as believe, that they shall be saved.

Object.

Object. But the Minister may mistake the matter.

Answer.

Answer. True, if hee speakes absolutely, but if hee speake upon condition of faith and true repentance, he may thereupon assure a man of salvation: hee may say, believe thou and repent truly, and thou shalt be saved. If a King should publish and make knowne, that whosoever of such a Citty shall come and doe such a thing, shall be thus or thus rewarded: and give charge to some to make it knowne to that Citty, shall wee say that any having authority to publish the Kings pleasure, doth mistake the matter in so doing: or that any of that place, to whome it should be said, Goe thou and doe that which the King hath appointed, and he thereupon going, and doing the thing appointed, doth presume or take on him to know more than he ought touching the Kings pleasure? Surely no. Now so it is in this case, and therefore it is but a cavelling slander of the Papists, to say, that wee are too curious to goe beyond things revealed, in that wee take on us to come to infallible knowledge of our owne salvation. And to come againe home to our selves, let not any of us take occasion upon the doctrine now delivered, to say, it is curiosity to search, whether I am in the number of Gods chosen or no: and therefore say, I will referre all to God, and let him worke his will, as some ignorant, or carnall Gospellers use to say: No, no, we may, and wee ought to search into it, whether wee be in the state of grace and salvation or no, it is no presumption, wee have the Apostles warrant for it, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Prove your selves whether you are in the faith; examine your selves: know ye not your owne selves that Iesus Christ is in you? except you be reprobates.* Therefore we may, and we ought to search whether wee be in the number of Gods chosen or no, yet by direct meanes wee are not to prie into Gods closet, or to step up into heaven and search the roules of heaven, whether our names be there written or no; but looke thou into the closet of thine owne heart, and see there if thou finde assurance of faith (the testimony of Gods Spirit, bearing witness with thy spirit, that thou art the childe of God) and the fruits of his grace: and finding these things thou maist, yea, thou oughtest to be fully perswaded of it, that thou art in the number of Gods chosen: and let us not be driven from this duty, it is the duty of every one thus to search, whether he be in the state of grace and salvation or no, that finding himselfe in that state, hee may rejoyce with joy unspeakable and glorious: finding himselfe not in that state, hee may use all good meanes with speed to come unto it.

We may, and ought to search whether we be in the state of grace, or no.

Come we to the words following, wherein is set forth the roote of that boldnesse that was in false teachers, namely, the vaine pride of their carnall mindes, (*rashly puff up with his fleshy minde*) where note we one thing in generall.

Deſ. 6
Boldnesse and presumption comes from the vaine pride and windy conceit of a carnall minde.

Hence it is cleere, that the vaine pride and windy conceit of a carnall minde is the mother of boldnesse and presumption, it is that which makes men take on them the knowledge of things not revealed, yea, it is that which doth thrust men into many bold actions: what a bold part was it in *Pharaoh* and his hoast to follow after the Israelites into the sea? whence came it? the Text is plaine, it came from a proud conceit, that they could doe what they list themselves: Exod. 15. 9. saith *Moses*, *The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake them, I will divide the spoyle, my lust shall be satisfied upon them, I will draw my sword, mine hand shall destroy them.* Thus boasted railing *Rabshakeh* with many

many insolent words, 2 King. 18. 17. and we need not seeke farre for examples to this purpose, we may have them amongst our selves. What is it (I beseech you) that makes such as live ignorantly and wickedly, presume they shall die blessed, and obtaine life and salvation? is it any other thing than a false conceit and vaine imagination of a strong faith? and whatsoever Preachers say to the contrary, that they are in a damnable case, yet they (through an empty conceit of their owne) trust that God will be more mercifull than so: and hope to be saved as well as the best (for so commonly they speake) they dare be bold to equall themselves with the best: what is it that makes men many times thrust themselves into reasoning of other mens lives and actions unknowne? is it not a proud conceit of themselves, that they are not as other men? yea, wee shall finde, if we doe observe it, that in relating other mens knowne finnes, (and upon just occasion) there will be sometimes a secret lifting up of our selves above them that are so faulty: we are to take heed of it.

And for use of this point: let us know that if we would be free from presumption in any kinde, it must be by casting out pride and selfe conceit: so long as wee keepe that within us, it will make us presume even upon that for which wee have no warrant in the Word of God, as that a blessed death shall close up a cursed life: let us therefore empty our selves of all pride and high conceit of our selves, and to this end labour to see thine owne corruption and misery, the more thou seest that, the more thou shalt be humbled: thus it was with Paul, Rom. 7. None are more proud and presumptuous than such as see not their owne wretchednesse: labour thou to see the cursed corruption of thine owne heart, and thy state by nature, that thou art a child of wrath and perdition: yea, if thou beest in the state of grace, yet consider thou standest by grace, and hast many infirmities, and thou shalt finde it will be a notable meane to cure pride, and to cast out all high conceit of thy selfe, and so keepe thee from boldnesse and presumption.

Now, let us proceede to a more speciall consideration of this part of the description of false teachers: that they were such as were (*vainly puffed up with their fleshy minde*) the word here rendered (*vainly*) may be translated vainly, for so it doth properly signifie. Now that may be understood two waies, either vainly without cause or matter at all, or vainly without fruit or profit: so the word is used, Gal. 3. verf. 4. *Have you suffered so many things in vain?* that is, without fruit or profit: but here we are to understand the word in the first sense, vainly (that is) without any cause, or matter at all, for which they should be proud. (*Puffed up*) This is a metaphoricall and borrowed speech, taken from a bagge or bladder blowne up with wind, to set out the nature of pride, which is to lift up the heart, and to make it swell like a bladder full of wind, and in the meaning is vainly proud (*with his fleshy minde.*) The words are with the minde of his flesh: the meaning is, with his carnall, corrupt and unregenerate minde. Thus then conceive wee these words, as if the Apostle had said: Vainly, without cause or matter for which he should be so swelling and proud through the corruption of his carnall minde.

Now first in that the Apostle saith, rashly or vainly without cause or matter proud, we are plainly taught:

That there is sometimes a pride without any matter or cause to be proud of; there is sometimes a pride upon a meere imagination and conceit of something, when there is nothing; a poore pride (as I may call it) a proud heart in a poore breast, when upon a vaine conceit men are proud of that they have not. Thus it was with the Church of Laodicea, Rev. chap. 3. verf. 17. *Thou sayest I am rich, and increased with goods, and have neede of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poore, and blinde, and naked.*

Note.

Use.

The way to free our selves of presumption is to cast out pride and selfe-conceit.

Note.

Interpretation

Doctr. 10.

Men are sometimes proud of nothing, and their swelling imaginations goe hand in hand with emptinesse.

Reasons.

1

Yea, pride and swelling imaginations commonly goe hand in hand with emptinesse, and the reasons of it are these :

2

First, because they (in whom are swelling imaginations) feelee no want, and therefore cannot pray for a supply of their wants.

Secondly, because such as are not capable of grace : for God gives grace to the humble, but the proud and rich, such as in their owne conceit are full, hee sends away empty.

Vse.

Reproofe of
such as are
proud of grace
and spirituall
things which
are not in
them.

Not to enlarge this point, but to make use of it : is not this kinde of pride found amongst our selves? are there not some who are proud of that they have not, in respect of grace and spirituall things? For example, many there be who are lift up with a conceit of faith, they have this opinion of themselves, that they believe in Christ, and take themselves to be in very good case, and yet indeede come to the triall, and wee shall finde they have not in them any dram of true faith. Have they hearts enflamed with a love to Gods glory? have they a fervent desire, that the name and glorious Gospell of Christ may be magnified? have they an earnest care of the good of their brethren? doth that care breake out and shew it selfe in actions tending to that purpose? for these be infallible markes of true and lively faith : no, these things are wanting, and yet they swell with conceit of true faith. Yea, some there be who having some measure of knowledge and grace, and looking on that through a false spectacle of selfe-love, do overweene it, and are conceited and proud of that measure that is not in them, and so are vainly puffed up, and even they also are proud without any matter of pride at all.

Quest

Why then (will some say) is it lawfull to be proud of something when wee have some matter to be proud of, as when we have a measure of knowledge and grace?

Answ.

I answer no, though doubtlesse the other kinde of pride be more hatefull : a poore man proud is most odious; yet is pride for something, hatefull and abominable : for, *what hast thou, saith the Apostle, that thou hast not received?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. And that we may yet further see the ugliness of this sinne, and so be brought to an utter dislike and detestation of it : consider we both the causes of it and the fruits of it. Without question, the father of it is the Divell, and the mother of it is ignorance : therefore the Apostle saith, Rom. 11. 25. *I would not brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this secret* : yea, the mother of it is not ignorance naturall or a meere absence of knowledge, but affected and wilfull ignorance : for if we did not wilfully shut our eyes, having any grace given us, wee could not chuse but see that grace to be a free gift, and that we of our selves are to every good thing not onely insufficient, but even reprobate and repugnant : and that the gift we have is imperfect : that we know but in part : and are sanctified but in part : and touching the fruits of pride, they are most bitter and unfavoury, it make men abuse their good gifts given to profit others, even to the scorn and contempt of others : it is as *a dead stie in the house of the smart sycamore* of grace, Eccles. 10. 1. A proud person will never bend downe to be serviceable to any, he admits no familiarity with any. Pride separates men from their brethren, 1 Cor. 4. 7. and (that which is worst of all) proud swelling for any gift makes odious in the sight of God, not onely as other sins doe, but after a speciall manner, because it returnes not that glory to God that is due to him. The proud person takes the glory due to God to himselfe, and so stirres up the Lord (who is jealous of his glory) to wrath against him : and therefore was it twely said, Prov. 16. 18. *Pride goes before destruction, and an high minde before the fall* : it is an immediate fore-runner of destruction.

Seeing then the father of pride is the Divell, the mother of it wilfull and affected ignorance, the fruits of it is abuse of good gifts, and a provoking of the Lord to wrath, and that after a speciall manner to our downfall and destruction :

The ugliness
of pride discovered.

let

let us take heed wee be not puffed up; either with a conceit of that is not in us; that wee have faith when we have none; or for any gift of grace bestowed upon us; ever remembering the words of the Apostle, *What hast thou that thou hast not received?*

Marke we further, that the Apostle is not content to say that the false teachers hee speaks of, were rashly puffed up; but hee addes, that their pride and swelling was through the corruption of their carnall mindes [*rashly puffed up with his fleshy mindes.*]

Hence wee may take up this conclusion, that it is the corruption of minde that makes proud; pride comes from within, even from the corruption of the heart and minde. Habak. 2. 4. the Lord saith in plaine termes, *Hee that listeth up himselfe, or he that is puffed up, his minde is not right in him.* his pride comes from the corruption of his minde. David clearing himselfe of pride, and of ambition, and protesting his humility before the Lord, Psal. 131. vers. 1. saith first of all, *Lord, mine heart is not haughty,* and then, *neither are mine eyes lofty, neither have I walked in great matters, and hid from mee:* giving to understand, that the cause of pride is haughtinesse of heart; from the haughty heart comes proud lookes, and lofty eyes.

The reason of this is plaine, namely, this it is. Not riches, honour, or any other good thing, either inward or outward that is in it selfe the cause of pride; it may be an accidentall occasion, but no true proper cause of it. The cause is an overweening conceit of the worth and excellency of some inward or outward gift; and therefore pride ever comes from within, even from the corruption of the heart.

This then (for the use of it) must teach us, not to suffer our hearts to settle and seate themselves on the good things we have either of body or minde, as sufficient and highly deserving in themselves: we are not to rest on them as a sufficient stay and strength, but remember whence they have power to effect our purpose, and to doe us good; even from the hand that gave them. To make good our hope, as Job speaks, Job 31. 24. or to rest on any good thing as sufficient in it selfe to doe us good, is the very roote of pride. When Nabuchadnezzar was walking upon the top of his palace, let his heart please it selfe in the consideration of his greatnesse and dominion, then hee brake out into that proud speech, Dan. 4. 27. *Is not this great Babel, that I have built for the house of the Kingdome, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majesty?* Yea, wee shall finde that the deare servants of God have beene thus overtaken, when they have suffered their hearts to dwell upon the good things they enjoyed. When David had overcome his enemies, and was settled in his throne, then looking with too much delight on his owne strength, he began to vaunt himselfe of the multitude of his people, and must needs have them numbred, 2 Sam. 24. 2. Let it therefore worke on all their hearts, whom the Lord hath preferred above others in respect of any condition or ability, such as have any gift of God either inward or outward, be it riches, or whatsoever it is, suffer not thine heart to dwell upon it; for certainly if thou doe, it will make thee proud. And to this purpose consider wee these two things:

First, consider the weaknesse and want even of the best gifts themselves, how unable they are to accomplish our desires, unless a stronger power, even the hand of God give strength unto them. For that which is said of bread (that *man lives not by bread only*, and that it is not food received that doth nourish us, but the blessing of God upon it) may be truly said of other gifts.

Again, consider that in the matter of justification in the sight of God, no excellency of any gift (be it faith it selfe) is of any moment; for faith doth not justify for the dignity of it, but as an instrument apprehending that which doth justify.

Dott. 1.

Pride comes from the corruption of the heart and minde.

Reason.

Use.

Wee must not suffer our hearts to settle on the good things wee enjoy, as sufficient in themselves to doe us good.

Two reasons against suffering our hearts to settle on the good things we enjoy.

The due consideration of these two things will be an excellent meanes to keepe our hearts from swelling in respect of any gift of God bestowed upon us.

One thing more is offered to our consideration from these words, *rashly puff up with his fleshy minde.*

Doctr. 12.
The word (flesh) in Scripture signifies sometimes the corruption of the chiefe faculties of the soule.

Wee are to marke that the Apostle gives this Epithete, and this title to the minde that it is fleshy. Hence it followeth directly, that the word [flesh] in Scripture signifies more than sensuality: It is put many times in Scripture to signifie the corruption of the chiefe faculties of the soule, even of the minde and conscience. And hence it is very cleere, that even the minde and understanding not regenerate, is fleshy; therefore the Apostle saith, Rom. 7. 8 *The wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can it be.*

Note.

Vse 1.
Confutation of the Papists.

Vse 2.
We must labour especially for the renovation of our mindes.
Note.

Which must needs be understood of the very best part of the soule, wherein wisdom is seated: and Gal. 5. 20. the Apostle reckons heresie; (which is an error of the minde and understanding) among the works of the flesh: and hereupon one speaks thus: saith he, The Apostle ascribes those finnes to the flesh, which beare principall sway in the Divell, who certainly hath no flesh; for hee saith, enmity, contention, emulation, envie, are works of the flesh, the head and fountaine whereof is pride, which raignes in the Divell though he have no flesh. This I observe, to meeete with the error of the Papists, who teach, that the word [flesh] in the Scripture opposed to spirit, signifies onely sensuality, and the corruption of the inferiour parts of the soule; which is flat against the plaine evidence of this, and many other places of Scripture. And wee are to take knowledge of it, that even our minds not regenerate, are flesh and corrupt: and so labour to be renewed in the spirit of our minds, as the Apostle exhorteth, Ephes. 4. 23.

Yea, let us especially labour for the renovation of our mindes. Darknesse and ignorance in the minde, brings forth nothing but sinne in all the powers of the soule. And as before the fall, the minde retained the chiefe part of the Image of God; so now being corrupted it is most corrupt; and the greater naturall gifts of minde we have, as wit, capacity, judgement, &c. the sinner instruments wee have to encrease in sinne: therefore let us never rest, till wee finde, by the use of the good meanes, that we are renewed in our mindes.

Verf. 19. *And holdeth not the head, wherof all the body (furnished and knit together by joynts and bonds) encreaseth by the encreasing of God.*

IN this verse, the Apostle doth continue his description of false teachers, such as laboured to draw the Colossians away from the truth: and hee further sets them out to be such, as did not truly acknowledge, nor cleave to Christ the head of his Church, in the first words [And holdeth not the head] and having made mention of Christ under the word of similitude [head] hee then descendeth into a description of Christ, as hee hath relation and reference to his mysticall body the Church, as the head of it; and he describes him to be as an head, giving life and growth to his whole Church, and to every member of it, (wee taking these words together) [wherof all the body encreaseth] as indeed they are to be taken in the purpose of the Apostle: the words betwene them [furnished and knit together by joynts and bonds] are a declaration of the quality and condition of that body, to which Christ (as an head) gives life and growth: that it is a body furnished and knit together by joynts and bonds: as if the words were read thus: Wherof all the body thus qualified, namely, furnished and knit together by joynts and bonds encreaseth. In the last words is specified what kinde of growth and encrease it is, that Christ as an head gives to the body his Church, namely, a divine and spirituall encrease, [encreaseth with the encreasing of God.

Come

Come wee to the words of this verse, as they are laid downe by the Apostle, *And holdeth not the head*, that is, *acknowledgeth not the head*, nor cleaveth to it in his doctrine. For the Apostle here speaks of false teachers, such as sought to bring in false doctrine of the worship of Angels; and his meaning is, that they in that their doctrine did not acknowledge nor cleave (as they sought) *to the head*, that is, to Christ, who is as an head to his Church: they did not acknowledge Christ to be the only head, and cleave to him as the only head of the Church, [whereof] the originall word signifies not *of which*, with a reference to the word [head] they are *ἐκ τῆς κεφαλῆς τοῦ σώματος τοῦ ἐκκλησίας τοῦ σώματος τοῦ ἐκκλησίας*, but *ἐκ τῆς* of whom, with relation to Christ [all] that is, the whole body, namely, the Church, which is as one body consisting of many members, conjoynd in one body. Thus then conceive we these words, *And holdeth not the head whereof all the body encreaseth*. As if the Apostle had said, *And doth not in his doctrine acknowledge nor cleave to Christ as the onely head of his Church, of whom the whole Church as one entire body encreaseth*.

Now here, first observe wee that our Apostle doth taxe false teachets to be such as hold not Christ the head of his Church, and why? because they taught invocation and adoration of Angels. Hence then it is very cleere, that such as tread in their steps, and now teach intercession and meditation of Angels and Saints, hold not Christ the head: plead what they will, indeed they do not truly acknowledge Christ to be the onely head of his Church.

The reason of this is manifest, because Christ is head of his Church as hee is Mediator, God and man; therefore they that acknowledge other mediators besides Christ, as Angels and Saints: set up also other heads, and hold not him to be the onely head of his Church.

Let then the Papists say what they will in defence of their invocation of Angels and Saints : they cannot possibly avoyd the evidence of this text of the Apostle, convincing them in respect of that, to be such as hold not Christ the head of his Church.

Now in that the Apostle saith, *holdeth not the head*, meaning Christ, (*whereof all the whole body*) meaning the Church: Wee are given to understand thus much,

That there is the same relation and union between Christ and his Church, that there is between the head of a man and the body: and this comparison is often used in Scripture, to set out the relation and union that is between Christ and his Church, Ephes. 5. 22. the Apostle saith, *God appointed Christ to be the head of his Church, which Church is his body.*

And that we may rightly conceive that relation and union that is between Christ and his Church, compared to a head and a body: *see A. 1. 1. 1. 1.*

Know we first, that there being two natures in Christ, his divine, and humane, Christ is the head to his Church, in respect of both, even whole Christ God and man; for he is so the head, as he is the Saviour of his Church. These two are conjoyned by the Apostle, Ephes. chap. 5. vers 23. *Christ is the head of his Church, and the same is the Saviour of his body.* Now Christ is the Saviour of his Church, not according to his divine nature alone, nor according to his humane nature, alone; but whole Christ in his God-head, and in his soule and flesh: therefore whole Christ is the head of his Church, and the Church and every true member is united to the whole Christ, yet in order t

First to the flesh and man-hood of Christ, and then by that to the God-head.

Secondly, we are to know, that though the union whereby Christ and his Church are conioyned be a true and reall union, yet it is not naturall, as when two things are ioyned in one nature; nor personall, as the soule and body are united; nor politicall or civill, as the Prince and people are conioyned; but it is mysticall and spirituall, by the bond of the same spirit, and by faith. Thus then

Interpre-
tation.

Doc. 1.

They who
teach interces-
sion and medi-
ation of Angels
& Saints hold
not Christ the
head of his
Church.

Reason.

V/c.

Conjunction
of the Papists
not to hold
Christ the
head of the
Church.

Dođ. 2.

There is the same relation and union between Christ & his Church, that there is between the head and body of a man. Christ is head to his Church in respect of both his natures.

**The union of
Christ and his
Church is
mysticall.**

then understand wethis truth, that Christ (both God and man in respect of both his natures after a spirituall manner) is knit to all the elect of God, called, justified, and sanctified, and so wee are to conceive of the relation and union that is betweene Christ and his Church, compared to an head and a body.

And first of all, this may serve to confirme that truth of doctrine delivered in our Church.

Use 1.
True believers
are justified by
Christ his right-
eousnesse im-
puted unto
them.

That as many as truly believe in Christ, they are justified by his righteousnesse imputed to them: for, there being that relation and union betweene Christ and his members, that there is betweene the head and the body; it must needs be that the graces and benefits of Christ doe truly and really belong to them; and what Christ did as Mediatour God and man, by the covenant of grace, is truly imputed to them that are one with him, true by the bond of his spirit and faith. We know that what is done by the head in a naturall body, is ascribed to the whole body: So, what was done by Christ as Mediatour, (and so the head of his mysticall body) may be truly imputed to all the members of that body.

Let then the Papists scoffe at our doctrine of imputed righteousness as absurd; if one should be said to live by the soule of another, or learned, by the learning of another: let us acknowledge and embrace it, as grounded on the neere union that is betweene Christ and his members, wee being so neerly conioyned on Christ, that we are of his flesh and bones, as the Apostle saith, Ephes. 5. 30. We must needs be iust by his righteousness, even his by inheretancie, and ours, given unto us by God, and apprehended by faith.

Use 2.
Our union
with Christ is
a ground of
patience and
comfort in
time of affli-
ction.

Againe, is it so that there is the same relation and union betwixt Christ and his Church, as is betwixt the head and body of a man? then let this be a ground of patience and of comfort to all true believers in time of affliction. Let them know that their affliction reacheth up to Christ their head; himselfe hath said it, that when they are hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sicke, and in prison; he is hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sicke, and in prison, Matth. 25. 35, 36. Act. 9. 3. When *Saul* breathed out threatnings and slaughter against the Church, he saith, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou mee*. Christ bearing part with us in our afflictions, certainly he will either moderate the weight of them, or give strength to beare them, or he will put an end to them.

Consider then in time of affliction besides this, that afflictions are thy lot and portion inevitable; and Christ hath gone before thee, and drunke of that cup, and thou art conformable to Christ in suffering, and they are but for a time. All which may minister matter of great comfort unto thee: yet consider, besides these things, that thy sufferings and afflictions reach up to Christ thine head, and thou shalt finde it will be a notable meanes to lift up thy fainting heart in thy greatest affliction. A man will not suffer smart in the least of his members, if he can helpe it: and shall Christ (to whom all power is given, in heaven, and in earth) suffer himselfe long to be pinched in any one of his members? certainly no, he will not. Wee have not an high Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, Heb. 4. 15. He hath had experience of them, and therefore will (after we have suffered a litle season) appeare to our comfort, Rev. 6. 11. Let us then rejoyce, saith *Peter*, 1 Epist. 4. 13. *In as much as wee are partakers of Christs sufferings, that when his glory shall appeare, wee may be glad and rejoyce, and be made partakers of his glory in heaven.*

A Popish er-
rour described.

Before I leave this point, I hold it meete to discover a Popish errour. The Papists they teach, that in regard of our union with Christ, the afflictions of believers are meritorious, and doe satisfie the iustice of God, and purchase his favour.

Objection.

For, say they, wee being united to Christ: our sufferings receive vertue from him to merit, though in themselves, we confesse with the Apostle, Rom. 8. 18. *They are not worthy of the glory that shall be revealed unto us, yet in that wee are members*

members of Christ, they receive influence from him our head, and are raised up to higher estimate, even to merit Gods favour. See the craft of these men to deceive the simple and their owne soules.

I answer them, our union with Christ can be no ground of merit. From thence they can never prove the afflictions of true believers to be meritorious, because our union with Christ is not personall, but mysticall; for personall union is the ground of merit, even in Christ himselfe. His manhood apart could merit nothing; they must then prove, that we believing in Christ, are received into unity of person with Christ, before they can truly conclude, that our afflictions doe merit or satisfie: but this they are never able to doe, and therefore they build upon the sand; and we are to renounce it as a Popish error and untruth, that our sufferings, by reason of our union with Christ, are meritorious.

Marke we further, the Apostle saith *boldeth not the head (whereof, or of whom)* with relation to Christ (for so we expound the words) he saith not from whom, but *of whom*. Hence we are put in minde of a difference betweene the members of Christ, and such as are not his members.

The members of Christ are of Christ, others are onely from him, as are all creatures; for all things that are, are the creatures of Christ, as hee is God, and so from him; but it is proper and peculiar to the members of Christ to be of him.

Deceive not thy selfe, whosoever thou art: if thou be not of Christ, even one with him by the bond of his spirit; thou art not a member of Christ, and then thou art only in the common condition of all creatures; thou art no neerer heaven than the oxe or the horse as yet, for they be the creatures of Christ, as he is God, and so if thou die in that state, thou art in farre worse case than the very Toad or venomous Serpent; for their death is an end of their misery, but thine is a beginning of endlesse woe without ease or remedy.

Observe yet further, it is not to be passed over without observation, that the Apostle saith, *Christ is the head, of whom all the body*, hee saith not of whom the body, but *of whom all the body enerveth*.

Hence then it is cleere, that he is the onely head of the universall Church, and it cannot be given to the Pope, or any other: as for the devised distinction of the new Papists, of head imperiall and ministeriall, it is both without warrant of the Word of God, and foolish; it implies a contradiction: for to be head, argues preheminance and superiority; and to be ministeriall, argues subjection and inferiority; therefore these two can never agree to the same subject.

Hence take wee further notice, that Christ is the head of all that believe in him, his graces, benefits, and works (as he is Mediatour) belong to them all; yea, as Christ by his gracious dispensation is head of his mysticall body, hee cannot spare any of his members, but every one is required to his perfection and fullnesse: so saith the Apostle, Ephes. 1. 23. *He is the head of his Church which is the body, even to the fullnesse of him that filleth all in all things*: which is an excellent sweete comfort to all true believers; it may give them assurance that they never be cut off from Christ: for why? Christ as the head of his Church is not perfect without every one of his members; and therefore it is not possible that any one of them should be cast off and severed from him. The head of the naturall body may be cut off and severed from the body; but Christ the head of his Church being not perfect without every one of his members, will not suffer any one of them to be cut off from him.

This also duly considered (that Christ is the head of all that believe) may minister great comfort to poore wretches such as be of low degree in the world, on whom proud Rufflers looke so bigge: If they believe in Christ, they have as much interest in all his benefits and merits, as the greatest: be not then cast downe in respect of thy meane condition in the world, thou art despised and made

Answer

Dott. 3

Christ his members are of him, others are only from him.

Vse.

If thou be not of Christ, thou art not a member of Christ.

Dott. 4.

Christ is the onely head of the universall Church.

Vse.

The Pope is not head of the Church.

Vse 2.

Christ his graces, benefits, and workes, as hee is Mediatour, belong to all true believers.

Nota.

Consolation.

Vse 3.

Comfort to the poore despised members of Christ.

made the foot-stoole of proud and great ones in this world, care not for it: be-
lieve in Jesus Christ, and thou hast as good part in him, and art as deere and neere
to him as the greatest Monarch in the world: hee is the head, and therefore as
kinde and loving, as good and gracious, as bountifull and beneficiall to thee, as
to any other whatsoever, and thinke on that to thy comfort.

Now wee are to come to the quality and condition of that body to which
Christ as an head gives life and growth, expressed in the next words, [*furnished
and knit together by joynts and bonds*] where the Apostle sets out the body of
Christ, by two conditions.

First, that it is such a body as is not in want, but every way furnished.

Secondly, that it is a body compacted and knit together; and then hee makes
known the instruments or meanes whereby it is furnished and knit together,
namely, *by joynts and bonds*.

I will briefly lay forth the meaning of these words (*furnished*) the originall
word signifieth, under supplied, or furnished, as the members of the body are
under the head: and furniture (being a word of relation, implying something
wherewithall a thing is furnished) It signifieth supplied or furnished with that
which is answerable to the furniture that comes from the head to the members
of the naturall body, namely, to the furniture of life, sense, and motion, and par-
ticular ability of every member: as of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling,
concocting, and the like; that as the body is under-supplied with life, sense, and
motion, and with particular ability of every member needfull, from the head:
so the body of the Church is under-supplied from Christ the head, with spirituall
life, motion, ability and grace, both with grace of holinesse and regeneration, and
with particular grace needfull: (*knit together*) this respecteth the members them-
selves; and the word signifieth compacted, or conjoynd with a most straight
and indissoluble band: (*by joynts and bonds*) The Apostle doth still continue
his similitude, that as the parts of the naturall body are furnished from the head,
and knit both to the head, and one to another by joynts and sinewes: so it is in
the mysticall body of Christ; the members of that body are furnished with
grace, and knit both to the head, and one to another, as it were by joynts and
sinewes. And by joynts and bonds in this place, we are to understand spirituall
joynts and ligaments, by which the furniture of grace is conveyed from Christ
to his members, and they knit both to him, and one to another; and those are
three. First, the spirit of Christ, Rom. 8. 9. *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ,
the same is not his.* Ephes. 4. 4. *One body, one spirit:* by his Spirit Christ doth com-
municate his grace to us, and we to our brethren. Secondly, faith; for by faith
we apprehend Christ, and are made one with Christ, and by the same we cherish,
comfort, and stirre up one another mutually in good things. Rom. 1. 11, 12.
*I long to see you (saith the Apostle) that I might bestow among you some spiritua-
all gift to strengthen you: that is, that I might be comforted together with you
through our mutuall faith, both yours and mine:* for with faith is alwaies joynd
the bond of love and peace: Gal. 5. 2. *Faith worketh by love.* Thirdly our severall
callings (not those by which we stand in relation, onely to the common-wealth,
and may be serviceable onely in things belonging to the body, as our severall
trades and occupations) but whereby we stand in relation to Christ; as the cal-
ling of the Minister, Father, Master, Husband, and the like; for these also are
spirituall joynts and bonds. This then is the full sense and meaning of the
Apostle in these words, as if hee had said: Being furnished or under-supplied
from Christ the head of his Church, with the grace of holinesse and regenera-
tion, and with particular grace needfull for every member: and the members
of it being neerely conjoynd one to another, that furniture descending
downe from the head to the member, and that conjunction of the mem-
bers, both to the head, and one to another being by meanes of the Spirit of
Christ,

Interpre-
sation.

There be three
spirituall joynts
and ligaments.

Christ, by faith, and by severall callings in the Church, as by so many ioynts and bonds.

Now first from this word (*furnished*) I, that the Apostle saith, that all the body is furnished from Christ the head, wee are plainly taught that every member of Christ receiveth vertue from Christ and is furnished with a measure of grace from him: every one hath a measure of spirituall life and holiness conveyed from Christ: yea, every one hath his particular grace, as the whole body of a man, and every member of the body to the least finger suckes vertue from the head, and the head is powerfull to cause it to live: so is it in the mysticall body of Christ, there is not a member of that body but it receives some vertue, from the head the Lord Iesus: yea, every one receives his owne particular grace. Christ is effectually in every one from the highest to the lowest. Ephes. 4. 6. the Apostle saith, Christ is the head, by whom all the body being coupled, and knit together by every ioynt, for the furniture thereof (according to the effectually power, which is in the measure of every part) receiveth increase of the body unto the edifying of it selfe in love: the Apostle having recounted many gifts and graces of the holy Spirit, ver. 11. concludes thus, All these things worketh the selfe-same Spirit, distributing to every man severally as he will. Now if any man aske the question, whether Christ the head of his Church doe furnish everyone of his members with like measure of grace or no. I answer no, he gives to some more, to some lesse, as every one shall bee an instrument of his glory, and as every one hath need either in doing or suffering more or lesse than others. No doubt Iob and other excellent Worthies, had a greater measure of patience given than others, that were not to under-goe such trials as they did: therefore as the Apostle, Ephes. 4. 7. saith, *to every one is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ*. And that we mistake not this poynt, know we that Christ gives to every one of his members an equall measure of his grace for their justification: one is not more or lesse iustified than another by the grace of Christ, but not an equall measure of inherent holiness to their sanctification, nor an equall measure of particular gifts and graces, but to some more, and to some lesse, according to his owne good pleasure, and as every one hath need. And we are not to envy such as have greater gifts than our selves (that by the way). For the point in hand it is cleere by that which hath beene said, that every member of Christ receives vertue from him, and is furnished with a measure of grace, it is not possible that any that are in Christ should be destitute of grace, and altogether want holiness: and therefore deceive not thy selfe whosoever thou art, if thou be a member of the mysticall body of Christ, thou canst not want furniture of grace in some measure, Christ is the head of whom all the body is furnished.

Hereby then trie thy selfe, whether thou belong to that body or no. Every one will beeheld a member of Christ, and come to the table of the Lord to scale up his union and fellowship with him: but where is that life of grace and holiness conveyed from Christ to his members? can wee perswade our selves wee are members of Christ, and yet live (as many doe) the life of nature, doing that which is good in our owne eyes according to the lusts of our owne hearts? for what should I say of our breaking the Sabbath, blasphemous oathes, drunkenness, cursed and bitter speeches and the like? is it possible that an heart so furnished and full of such corruption, is knit to Christ, and a member of Christ? surely wee might as well say, that a wooden legge, neither knit by common bond, nor having heat in it, is a member of a mans body.

Againe, where is that effectually working of Christ that putteth life and nimbleness into his members, in good things? In matters of the world, wee have great dexterity, we are apt to conceive, he so contrive for the best advantage, because wee favour the things of the world: but in matters of holiness and Religion, many of us are frozen and benumbed, and as it were without life,

Doe. 5.

Every member of Christ receives vertue from Christ, and is furnished with a measure of grace from him.

Quest.

Answ.

Note.

Trial of our selves whether we belong to the body of Christ or no.

V. 2.

Reproofe of those that want spirituall life and nimbleness in good.

things, and yet
thinke they are
the members
of Christ.

Note.

Doctrine 6.
Such as be of
the mysticall
body of Christ
are as neerely
knit together
as the mem-
bers of one
body.

A doubt.

Answer.

Note.

A ground of
perswasion to
mutuall love.

Christian love
is to be expres-
sed in two
things.

and can wee yet fancy, that we are members of Christ? Surely if wee thinke so, wee deceive our selves. Saint *Iohn* saith. 1 *Ioh.* 1. 6, *If we say we have fellowship with God, who is light, and yet walke in darkenesse, we lye:* so if we say, wee are one with Christ, and have fellowship with him who is full of grace, *Ioh.* 1. 14. and yet receive not of his fulnesse, some measure of grace: certainly we have no conjunction with Christ the head of his Church, and then consider what followes on that; if wee have not Christ our head in this life, wee shall have him our Iudge and condemner in the life to come: and as in this life wee have but a sup-posed union with Christ; so in the life to come wee shall have but an imaginary fellowship with him, and indeed a finall separation from him and from his A-ngels and Saints: and wee shall have fellowship with the Devill and his an-gels.

In that the Apostle saith further, the body of the Church (whereof Christ is the head) is knit together; wee are given to understand, that such as are of the mysticall body of Christ, are as neerely conjoynd as members of one body: and this the Apostle teacheth plainely, 1 *Cor.* chap. 12. vers. 12. *As the body (saith hee) is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body which is one, though they be many, yet are but one body, even so is Christ; that is, Christ mysti-call, or the mysticall body of Christ. Romans chap. 12. vers. 5. the Apostle saith, that beleevers being many are not onely one body in Christ, but every one is ano-ther's member, even as members one of another: A speech worthy observation: we are so neerely knit together in the mysticall body of Christ, that we are as it were a leg or an arme one of another.*

Now, before I come to make use of this, a doubt is to be removed. It may seeme, in that the members of the mysticall body of Christ are conjoynd as the members of the naturall body, and there is as neere an union betweene them, and so doubtlesse a good agreement of minde, and inward affection among them: it may seeme (I say) that unity is an infallible note of the Church, as the Papists teach, and that where there is unity and consent of minds and iudgements, there is the Church.

To this I answer: first, the Church is not one body simply considered, by, or in it selfe, but in relation to Christ, that is, the members of Christ must bee ioy-nd with him by his spirit and faith, and then one with another: therefore it is not the consent of men, though never so wise, but onely in Christ, and in good things, that can demonstrate and point out the Church.

Again, consent is not simply an infallible note of the Church, for it is some-time amongst the wicked, as amongst *Ioseph's* brethren, and among the So-domites, and in the kingdome of darkenesse, *Luke* 11. 21. And dissention may be sometimes among the godly, *Paul* and *Barnabas* dissented, *Act.* 15. 39. *Paul* and *Peter*, *Gal.* 2. 14. There were schismes in *Corinth*, 1 *Epist.* 1. 11. Consent therefore, is not simply a note of the Church, unlesse it be in true faith and do-ctrine. Let not then a glorious name of consent dazle our eyes, and make us thinke the Church is, where true faith and doctrine is not found: And for use of the point, it may serve as a ground of perswasion to mutuall love, which is an argument, wee have often occasion to speake of: and it cannot be too often urged in these dayes, wherein mens hearts are full of rancour, and malice, and di-stracted, and drawne asunder one from another: let us therefore consider that we are knit together as members of one body, yea as members one of another, and therefore ought to love as members of one body, and to expresse our love one to another, and that chiefly in two things. First, in communicating the good things wee have (either inward or outward) to others, according to their wants and our abundance, as *Iob* saith, *Hee was the eyes to the blinde, and the feet to the lame, Iob.* 29. 15. Secondly, in a fellow-feeling of the wants one of another: if the foot be hurt, the tongue laments it, the eyes weep for it, the head akes, and

and heart grieves for it : so must it be with us in respect of the miseries and afflictions one of another. We are to be touched with their griefes, feele the waight of their burthens, bee pressed with their bonds, as if we our selves were bound with them.

Now to stirre us up to these duties, much might be said: but consider we these two things.

First, consider the state of the body, if one member deny to communicate the good it hath received to another, as if the eye refuse to guide the feete by the sight of it, wee know the feet may stumble and endanger the whole body; or if the foot be wounded, and the eyes refuse to looke on it, the hands to handle it, danger may come to the whole body: so if we deny to communicate (the good we have received) to others that stand in need of it, besides this that the Lord may blow on our good gifts, and rise up in judgement against us, wee hazard the state of the body whereof we are members.

Againe, consider that our communicating good to our brethren, and our sympathy and fellow-feeling of their miseries, is a sure testimony of our union with Christ, for our union with Christ doth nothing profit God, though a thousand worlds were united unto him, hee hath set over the profit of that union to others, as our Saviour said to Peter, Ioh. 21. 16. *Peter lovest thou me? then feed my sheepe*; as if hee had said, Make it knowne thou art one with mee, and lovest me, by doing good to them that are mine. If then wee would not bee guilty of so great a sinne, as endangering the state of the body, whereof we are members which is a sinne against the light and order of nature: and if wee would have such testimony as cannot deceive us (that wee are one with Christ the head of his Church) let us be stirred up not to love in word and in tongue only, 1 Ioh. 3. 18. but to expresse our love one to another, both by communicating the good things wee have, one to another, and by a fellow-feeling of the miseries and afflictions one of another. Have wee wisdom? let us bestow it to the good of the ignorant. Have wee holinesse? let us make the best of it, to the winning of others. Have we plenty of outward things? let us therein communicate to others according to their need and our abundance. Onely one thing more I will note from these words (*furnished and knit together by joynts and bonds*) and then descend to that which followeth. In that our Apostle saith, that the body of the Church is furnished and knit together in joynts and bonds (that is) by meanes of the spirit and by faith in Christ, and by severall callings: we are given to understand, that not onely the spirit of Christ, and faith (whereof there is no question) but even every mans calling, by which he stands in relation to Christ, is or ought to bee a joynt or a sinew not onely for conjunction of him with Christ and with the members of Christ, but for conveyance of grace to others. Every mans calling by which he stands in relation to Christ (that is) that ranke, that order and degree any one hath in the mysticall body of Christ, as hee is a member of Christ, and is of this or that order in the mysticall body of Christ, as a beleeving Minister, father, or the like: even that calling and degree of every beleever, by which he hath speciall relation to other members of Christ, is to be as a joynt or sinew for the conveyance of grace to them: by that calling and degree, he is to transmit and convey the grace of Christ to those that are next to him, and to furnish them with the grace that he hath received from Christ himselfe, every calling in the mysticall body of Christ, being a juncture or bond, by which we are joynted and bound to others. The Apostle hath taught us, it must be a joynt of subministration or under furnishing others with grace, Ephes. 4. 16. in the originall the words are by every joynt of subministration, &c. and this truth is grounded on that generall exhortation of the Apostle Peter, 1. Ep. 4. 10. *Let every one as he hath received the gift, minister the same one to another, as good disposers of the manifold grace of God: every one according to the measure*

Note.

Doctr. 4.

Every mans calling where- by he stands in relation to Christ, is or ought to be as; a joynt or si- new to convey grace to others.

Use 1.
Every one in
his particular
calling is to be
a meanes to
convey grace
to others that
be under him.

Motives to
stirre up to this
duty.

1

of grace received, and according to his ability is to further the good of the mysticall body of Christ, and being as a ioynt or a sinew in that body, in respect of some particular calling, he is in that calling to doe the office of a ioynt or sinew: hee is to be as the ioynt is to the body, even a meanes to convey downe grace to those to whom he stands in speciall relation: the father to the children, the husband to the wife, the master to his servants, yea, and one brother to another, one fellow-servant to another, one neighbour to another is to be as a ioynt or sinew for conveyance of grace one to another; which is a duty not knowne to many in the world. Some are of opinion, and (if the question were asked what they think) they would so answer, that it is a duty proper and peculiar to the Minister of the word, to be an instrument under Christ for the conveyance of grace to the soules of men: and that it is a thing nothing at all concerning them, they hold themselves exempted and freed from that duty: I appeale to their owne consciences, whether many have not thus thought. Learne then (whosoever thou art) to reforme thy minde and iudgement. Art thou a father, a master, an husband, a neighbour? &c. Know, it is thy duty to be a meanes to convey grace to those that are under thee, or to whom thou standest in any speciall relation; though principally it concernes the Minister to edifie the body of Christ, Eph. 4. 12. yet the Apostle hath laid it on all Christians as a generall duty, 1 Thes. 5. 11. *edifie one another*; though the Minister be the mouth of the people to God, yet S. Iames hath taught, Iam. 5. 16. that we are to *pray one for another*.

Now these duties (generally pertaining to all Christians) doe certainly more neerey concerne them, as they have speciall relation one to another, &c. The father, the master, the husband, the Minister, are to edify their children, their servants, their wife, the body of Christ, &c. in grace and goodnesse, and to send up a message to heaven, and to call upon the Lord by prayer for them.

Now then to stirre us up in this duty, wherein many are much wanting, yea the most are so farre from this duty, that they minister nothing but infection to the soules of such as bee under them; no childe, no servant, no not the wife of their owne bosome hath helpe by them, to their salvation: their houses are nurseries of cursing, swearing, lying, ribaldry, and all manner of impiety. And therefore (to stirre us up to the duty now laid before us) consider we:

First, that the want of this duty is one principall cause that such as bee under us, profit not (as they might) by the publike ministry of the Word: as in the naturall body when there is a stop in the ioynt, or a convulsion, and the sinewes are drawne up, the paradii may thrive not; so is it in the mysticall body of Christ, when such as are ioynts (in respect of their place and calling) are not meanes to convey grace to such as are under them, they cannot so well thrive in grace.

Againe, the neglect of this duty will one day be most grievous to the conscience, when a man shall call to minde; that whereas hee ought to have beene a meanes to further the salvation of others, hee hath beene rather a meanes to further their damnation, no doubt it will be an heavy burthen to his conscience: yea as one saith, it shall bee an aggravation of his torment in hell, when hee shall have others (that have perished by his default) foaming out continuall curses against him, and accusing him for ever, as the murderer of their soules.

Adde to this a consideration of comfort and blessing, attending on the careful performance of this duty. As the neglect of it is full of bitterness; so doubtlesse the practise of it must needs be full of sweetnesse; and the blessing of it is that which the Lord vouchsafed to *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 17. hee will reveale his secrets to such, and will hide nothing from them that may bee for their good, and for their comfort. If then we desire that such as bee under us, should profit by the publike ministry of the Word; if wee would not have their not profiting as they ought, by our meanes, to be a discomfort to us when we have most need

of

of comfort, if we desire the blessing of the Lord upon us in the revelation of his secrets, and counsells: yea, the light of his countenance to our comfort, both in life and death. Let us then be stirred up to the practice of this duty, let us by instruction, counsell, admonition, consolation, prayer, &c. be meanes to convey grace to those, with whom we stand in any speciall relation; and remember that we in our severall orders and degrees are as joynts and sinewes, and let us doe the office of joynts and sinewes in the mysticall body of Christ.

Come we to the last words of this verse (*increaseth with the increasing of God.*) In these words the Apostle makes knowne unto us, that Christ the head giveth growth and increase to the body of the Church. And what kinde of growth it is (namely) an increase of God. There is an increase of the Church, when the number of believers is increased; whereof we read, Act. 5. 47. That the Lord added to the Church from day to day, such as should be saved: but that is not here meant. The meaning of the Apostle in these words, is briefly this. That the whole Church, and every member of the mysticall body of Christ, receives increase from Christ the head in regard of spirituall grace, as of faith, hope, love, patience, &c. which hee calls the increase of God, because it is divine and spirituall.

Hence wee are first plainly taught, that both the beginning and increase of grace is from Christ: of him as of the head, saith the Apostle, all the body of the Church, and every member of that body is furnished with grace, and being furnished increaseth: hee gives both the furniture of grace, and the increase of it, they are both his free gifts, freely given not upon any desert of ours: and that is further manifest by the different measure of grace, in that some have more, and some lesse; for that cannot come from any difference of believers justified, because one is not more justified than another; there is no inequality betwene them in that respect. Therefore it must needs be from the meere good will and pleasure of Christ, that some have a greater measure of grace, and some a lesse, and so both the beginning and increase of grace is the free gift of Christ; so saith the Apostle plainly, Ephel. 4. 7. To every one is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

This I note in a word, to let us see that it is not for the good usage of any grace, or by our manuring of the gifts of God (as the Papists speake and teach) that wee merit the increase of them. No, no, both the grace and the increase of it in every member of the Church is from the meere good pleasure of Christ.

They object, that which is in the parable. Mat. 25. 29. To every one that hath shall be given, and hee shall have abundance, and from him that hath not, even that hee hath shall be taken away. Say they, he that hath any talent and useth it well to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance, as a remuneration or reward of his good usage of it.

The meaning of our Saviour is, that he who useth his talent well shall have a blessing upon it for the increase of it, and not a remuneration for the good usage of it; as many appeare by the scope and drift of the parable, which is to stir men up to diligence. Christ gives to his members both the grace & the increase of it freely: hee will be good onely because hee hath bene good, and adde mercy to mercy. In the next place wee may easily see this conclusion laid before us.

That every true member of Christ increaseth in spirituall graces, every true believer increaseth in faith, hope, love, humility, and other graces given: and conditionally goes from one measure to another.

And hence it is, that their spirituall life is in Scripture compared to the ages of men; some are babes in Christ, some children, and some are of a riper age, and their holinesse is compared to the morning light, which shines brighter

Interpre-
tation.

Doct. 8.
Both the be-
ginning and
increase of
grace is from
Christ.

Vjs.
Our good u-
sage of grace
and our manu-
ring of Gods
gifts doth not
merit the in-
crease of them.
Obiect.

Answer.

Doct. 9.
Every true
member of
Christ increa-
seth in spiri-
tuall graces.

and brighter, *Isai. 58.8.* And it is the exhortation of the Apostle *Peter, 2 Epist. 3.18. grow in grace.*

The reasons and grounds of this, are these two.

First, because the whole worke of grace in any member of Christ, is from the will of Christ, which is unchangeable: therefore where he begins any grace, he will more and more perfect it.

Againe, all the members of the myſticall body of Christ are living members, *1 Pet. 2.5.* They are said to be living ſtones: therefore ever growing, for the ſpiritual life of grace cannot be idle, but it is ever going on from one degree to another: and howſoever the members of Christ doe ſometimes fall (of infirmity and ſinne) grievouſly, yet Christ their head, of his goodneſſe turneth that ſinne of theirs to good unto them: for they riſe againe more thankfull to him, more humble in themſelves, more milde and equall towards their brethren, and more wary over themſelves, and they cleave faſter to Christ. Therefore they daily encrease and goe on in grace.

Let this then be a ground of tryall to every one of us: Doe we perſwade our ſelves wee have knowledge, faith, humility, any other grace or ſanctification? let us hereby trie our ſelves: if that grace bee truly wrought, certainly it will encrease; and if it doe not, it is but a counterfeit or ſemblance of grace. Nature can give the counterfeit of any grace: a man may transforme himſelfe into the like of any grace; but the difference is this: counterfeit grace will not encrease, it is but as a painted tree, it will never grow greater: but grace truly wrought, is like the graine of muſtard ſeed caſt into the earth, *Matth. 13.32.* ſmall at the firſt, but when it is grown, it is the greateſt amongſt herbes. If then wee would not deceive our ſelves, let us not reſt in the beginnings of grace, but as the Apoſtle exhorts, *1 Tim. 4.6. Stirre up the gifts of God which are in us,* by the uſe of good meanes, as hearing, reading, and meditating in the word and prayer: and know wee that the Sacrament of the Lords Supper is a principall meanes that God hath ordained for the ſtrengthening of faith, and encrease of grace in us; becauſe it is not onely a Sacrament of nourishment and confirmation of faith, but becauſe the remembrance and faith wee have in the merit of Christ his paſſion, which is moſt lively ſet before us in that Sacrament, is the onely thing that gives us ſtrength and comfort againſt all tentations. Therefore they ſhew themſelves graceleſſe, and indeed not the members of Christ, who careleſſly neglect that Sacrament.

If wee perſwade our ſelves wee have any grace, let us bee carefull to uſe this and all other good meanes that ſerve for the encrease of it, and labour ſtill to goe on from one meaſure of grace to another, till wee bee come of ripe age and perfect ſtrength in Christ.

Verſ. 10. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ, from the ordinances of the world, why (as though ye lived in the world) are ye burdened with traditions?

This verſe hath relation to that which is immediately fore-going, on this manner: in the verſe before, the Apoſtle ſhewes that there is that neere union betwene Christ and his Church, that there is betwene the head and the body; and what Christ did as mediator: the members of his Church did it with him. When hee dyed, they dyed with him: hereupon the Apoſtle doth inferre in this verſe, *Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ, &c.* In this verſe the Apoſtle begins to deale againſt the corruption of Religion, and againſt ſeduction and drawing away the Coloffians from the truth, by meanes of certaine humane decrees and traditions, that falſe teachers ſought to thruſt upon them, as things neceſſary to bee obſerved for religion and conſcience ſake, and needfull

Vſe.
Triall whether
grace be truly
wrought in us,
or no.

Nota. doth
the graine
of muſtard
seed caſt
into the
earth.

doth
the graine
of muſtard
seed caſt
into the
earth.

doth
the graine
of muſtard
seed caſt
into the
earth.

needfull to salvation; and in this verse is laid downe his argument of confutation of them.

The argument is this: Ye are freed by Christ from the rites and ceremonies of the Law, therefore you ought not to bee subject to mens decrees and traditions that seeme to bee derived from thence.

Some would have the argument in this place to be from the greater to the lesse thus: Ye are not now subject to the rites and ceremonies of the Law being freed from them by Christ, therefore much lesse ought you to be subject to rites and ceremonies that are invented by the braine of men.

But as I take it, the argument is not so, but as now I have laid it downe. For it is not like that the false teachers of those times sought to impose on the Colossians any other things, than such as were either taken from Philosophy, and the learning of the Gentiles, or from the ceremoniall Law of Moses. And that such were these traditions here spoken of, it may appeare by the expressing of them in these termes, *touch not, taste not, handle not*; which (no doubt) were imitations of legall rites and ceremonies; and so the argument of the Apostle in this verse is to be conceived, as I have propounded it.

More specially wee have laid before us in this verse. First, the Apostles reason to dissuade the Colossians from submitting to the decrees and traditions of men, namely this, that they were freed from them by Christ his death, laid downe in the prooffe of it, that with Christ they were dead, and by death freed from them.

Secondly, the inference on that reason: (therefore you ought not to subject your selves to them) delivered by way of interrogation *why are ye burthened with them?* amplified by exprobration of the absurdity of such subjection, that it is all one as if they still lived in the world. *Why, as though ye lived in the world, are ye burthened with traditions?*

[*Dead with Christ*] To be dead with Christ, is to have fellowship with him in his death: even to die with him, as the members of his body; [from the ordinances of the world] By the ordinances of the world, we are to understand Legall Ceremonies; the originall words are the same with those, vers. 8. and so to bee understood. Now whereas the Apostle saith, *Dead from the ordinances of the world*: it is not an usuall manner of speaking in the Scripture, to say, *Dead from*, but rather, *dead to things* that are dead to the Law, dead to sinne: and therefore the meaning is, as if the Apostle had said, *dead*, and by death freed from the ordinances of the world [as though ye lived in the world.] To live in the world may be taken two wayes.

1. Either to live in the world in respect of bodily life:
2. Or to live after the course of this world: as Ephes. 2. 2. *If herein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world.*

And in this latter sense wee are to take these words, *as though ye lived in the world*: that is, as though ye were not dead with Christ, and by death freed from the orders of the world, but still lived after the course of the world: (*are ye burthened with traditions*.) In the originall, wee have but one word, it cannot bee so expressed in English, it signifieth thus much: Are yee held under the decrees of men, or such things as seeme good to men: so this translation, (*are ye burthened with traditions*) may bee justified, though the Papists carpe at it. This then is the meaning of the Apostle in this verse: If ye are members of Christ be dead with him, and be as free as dead men from the Ceremonies of the Law, why (as though ye still lived after the course of the world) are ye held under the decrees and traditions of men, which seeme to bee derived from the braine of men.

Of the first part of this verse, namely the reason of the Apostle, *If ye be dead with Christ from the ordinances of the world*, much might bee spoken, but we

An argument
confuting hu-
mane decrees
and traditions.

Dead
from
the
Law
of
Moses
and
from
the
traditions
of men
in the
world

Dead
from
the
ordinances
of the
world
[*Interpreta-
tion*]
Dead
from
the
ordinances
of the
world
[*Interpreta-
tion*]

X

meaning is
not to be
buried
in the
world

Doctr. 1.

Death sets
men free from
the Lawes of
men, and from
all hard taxa-
tions in the
world.

Vse 2.

We are not to
feare them only
who can kill
the body, but
him who can
destroy both
body and soule

Vse 3.

We are not to
be too much
cast downe in
our outward
troubles.

we have handled the chiefe things thence offered heretofore; as that there is so neere an union betweene Christ and his members, that when he dyed, they dyed with him, of that we spake, verſ. 12. And also of the doctrine offered from those words, *ordinances or rudiments of the world*, we spake, verſ. 8. I will not now againe handle those poynts. Onely one thing more we may gather from the reason of the Apostle: and for concluding the poynt, we are to marke, that the Apostle saith, *If ye be dead in Christ from the ordinances of the world*: meaning, if yee be freed from them: he puts *dead from them*, for freed from them; signifying indeed, that they were as free from them, as dead men that had nothing to doe with them.

The poynt that hence I gather is this: That death is a freedome, death sets men at liberty from the lawes and ordinances of men; yea from all hard taxations, from bondage and servitude in the world, and from all miseries they are subject to in this world. That which *Iob* saith of the servant, *Iob 3. 19.* that death sets him free from his master, is true of all kind of outward servitude, bondage, slavery, or misery that men undergoe in this life whatsoever: death frees them from it. Afflictions are but for this life onely, *Rom. 8. 18.* Death puts an end to them: the malice of the devill, the rage of tyrants, and violence of bloody persecutors can reach no further than this life: they can but kill the body, as our Saviour saith, *Math. 10. 28.* and when that is done they must cease from their tyranny, therefore we are not to feare them.

Our Saviour himselfe makes this use of it, *Fear not them which kill the body, and when they have done that, can goe no further; but feare him which is able to destroy both body and soule in hell.*

Againe, is it so that death is a freedome from all miseries that men are subject to in this world? then bee not too much cast downe in any outward trouble or calamity that can befall thee: as sicknesse, poverty, losses, painfull labours, &c. Thy life is but short, therefore that trouble cannot be endlesse: death shall put an end to it: onely let thy care and endeavour be, that thy death be not the beginning of that misery that never shall have end. Many persons having no assurance of a better life, after this life is ended, but onely out of their impatience in respect of aches, and paines, and lingring diseases, (or other troubles which they endure) long for death, as *Iob* saith, *Iob 3. 21.* and say sometimes, Oh happy were I if I were dead, then should I be free from my paine and trouble, as if death were an end of all kind of misery; never remembering that death in sinne will not rid them from misery, but is the very gate through which they passe, into the gulfes of endlesse woe. Death indeed puts an end for a time to the aches and paines wee endure in the body; yet that is but a thing common to us with the dumbe beast. In that respect the sore travelled horse is happy when hee dieth; but death in sinne is a passage of the soules of men from lesse misery to greater: therefore never thinke thy selfe happy if thou wert delivered by death from aches and paines which thou indurest in this life, unlesse thou have assurance of a better life after this life is ended. Labour thou to be sure to die in the Lord, which thou shalt doe if thou live in the Lord, or rather have the Lord Iesus living in thee, *Galat. 2. 20.* If thou live by faith in the Sonne of God, and repent of thy finnes, and have true peace of conscience as the earnest of thy salvation, then indeed thy death shall put an end to all thy miseries: thou shalt rest from all thy labours, from all kind of sorrow and suffering; yea death shall give thy soule an entrance to everlasting ioy and glory. If thou hast this assurance, (thou lying under some grievous affliction) thou maist lawfully say with the Apostle, *Phil. 1. 23.* *I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ.*

Come we to the inference of the Apostle in the other part of this verse, *why (as though ye lived in the world) are ye burthened with traditions?* where first observe the manner the Apostle useth in bringing in of this conclusion: hee saith not

not

not barely you are dead with Christ from the ordinances of the world, and therefore ought not to submit your selves unto them: but hee brings in his conclusion by way of interrogation, *why are ye burthened with traditions?* which is very emphaticall and powerfull; and hee amplifies it by laying before them how absurd a thing it were, if they should so doe: that it were all one as if they lived still in the world (*why as though ye lived in the world, are ye burthened with traditions?* as if he had said: If such as live in the world should subiect themselves to those ordinances, I would make no great matter of it; but you Colossians, (who prove your selves to be dead with Christ from the ordinances of the world, and not to live after the course of the world) for shame doe not you suffer your selves to be subiect to the decrees and traditions of men.

Hence wee may take out this conclusion: that such as professe themselves to be dead with Christ, and taken out of the corrupt state of the world, are by the remembrance of that profession to be kept from doing any thing contrary or unbecoming the same. We finde this as a reason of waight often used in the Scripture: either to perswade to some good thing, or to dissuade from some evil, Genes. 13. 8. *Abraham used it as a speciall meane to quiet matters betweene him and Lot;* that howsoever the Canaanites were at jarre and discord one with another, yet it ought not to be so betweene them, because they were brethren, and professed the same true faith and religion. Math. 6. 32. *After these things seeke the Gentiles.* 1 Cor. 6. 1. The Apostle upon this ground dares the Corinthians; *Dare any of you having businesse against another be judged under the unjust; and not under the Saints?* as if he had said, Doe not you remember that you are Christians, and professing the true faith of Christ, dare you then goe to law one with another, under unjust and infidel judges, and not under the Saints? it is a monstrous shame for you so to doe. By these testimonies wee see we are to take advantage of that profession we make, and by the remembrance of that, to be kept from doing any thing unbecoming.

Let all such as professe religion and the feare of God thinke on it. Art thou (being a professor of religion) troubled and stirred up by the devill, and thine owne corruption, to covetousnesse, to rash anger, or to any other known sin? remember thy profession, and learne to say as good *Nehemiah* said, Neh. 6. 11. who (when he was moved by a false Prophet, to go into the Temple to save his life) said, *should such a man as I flee?* So say thou, should such a man, or such a woman as I be covetous, or rashly angry? should I (that professe my selfe to depend on Gods providence, and to seek after other things (even things eternall) and lasting for ever) greedily hunt after the things of this life? no, no, I will not doe it; it were a derogation to the glory of my God, whom I professe to be my gracious father; a dishonour to the profession I make: scandalous and offensive to other weake professors; a meane to keepe backe some not yet called, a giving advantage to the obstinate, and an opening of the mouths of the wicked Atheists and enemies of the truth, even to speake evill of the professors of the Gospel; therefore far be it from me, I will not doe it. Thus are we to reason and resolve with our selves, in consideration of our holy profession; not to doe any thing contrary or unbecoming to the same.

We are to marke further that the Apostle saith, *why as though ye lived in the world,* that is, as though ye lived after the curse of this world; implying by that speech, that the Colossians did not, or at least ought not to live after the course of the world.

The point of instruction hence arising is, that though we live in the world, yet we are not to live after the course of the world: the Lord will have his children to live in the world, and not to separate themselves from the world, but to live as *Lot* did in Sodome, in the throng of this sinfull world, according to the limits of their particular places and callings. And that for these reasons.

First,

Dof. 2.

The remembrance of our Christian profession ought to keepe us from doing any thing contrary or unbecoming the same.

Vs.

True professors of religion are to gather strength against tentations to sinne by remembering that holy profession.

Dof. 3.

Though we live in the world, yet we are not to live after the course and fashion of the world.

Reasons.

First, that the gift of grace that they have received, may be used for the good of others.

Note.

Secondly, that there may be a triall of our strength in resisting the assaults of Satan in evill examples, for that is indeed true resistance of sinne: the victory over it is most victorious, when conflicting with many occasions and allurements to it, we strive against it, and overcome it; and he is truly good, who is good amongst them that are evill.

For these causes will the Lord have his children to live among the wicked of the world, but to keepe themselves unspotted of the world or any corruption in the world, Rom. 12. 2. *Fashion not your selves like unto this world*, Ephes. 5. 11. *Have no fellowship with the unfruitfull workes of darknesse, but even reprove them* rather. Phil. 3. 20. *Our conversation must be in heaven, free from all dregs of all earthly corruption*. Many other places might be brought to this purpose: but for the use of this point.

Use.

It is a vaine
plea, to say,
many doe this
or that, and
therefore why
may not I doe
it?

This meetes with that plea many use in defence of their sinne which they are loth to forgoe. Oh (say they) many doe it, and why may not I doe it? If wee live in the world, we must doe as other men doe; sweare with them that sweare, drinke with the drunkard, and be prophane with them that are prophane; or else we shall bee counted as no body in the world. Is it so that thou wilt not bee perswaded that this is thy duty, that though thou live in the world, yet thou art not to live after the course of the world, but thou must doe as other men doe? Know then that thou shalt one day suffer, together with others, the punishing hand of God shall one day overtake both thee and them: yea, let mee tell thee more, there is no doubt but beastly drunkards, filthy adulterers and the blasphemous wretches that are in the world, may remember some (like to themselves) on whom the Lord hath shewed his judgements: they may call to mind some that (together with their blasphemy) have belched out their last breath, or in a drunken fit have belched out their owne soules; and that lothsome and incurable diseases have beene sent on the bodies of filthy adulterers and yet wilt thou still goe on in the same course? know then that thy punishment shall bee greater than theirs, thou having such examples before thee, and yet wilt not be moved by them to break off thy sins by repentance: thy punishment shall one day farre exceed theirs. *He that slayeth Cain*, (saith the Lord, Gen. 4. 15. *shall be punished seven fold*. Cain was a murtherer, and the Lords hand was upon him for his sin, and made him an example, he set a marke on him and if any should be so bold as to commit the same sin, having him marked before him, and to murther him, his punishment should be seven fold: so certainly if thou have an example of Gods judgement before thee, and thou canst remember the Lords hand hath beene in fearefull manner, upon one like to thy selfe, and yet thou still wilt goe on in the same sin; know, that one day thy judgement shall be farre greater than his.

Observe yet further this inference of the Apostle, together with his amplification of it: hee saith, *why as though ye lived in the world, are ye held under the decrees of men*; that is, why, as though ye were not dead with Christ, but still lived in the world, are you subiect to mens decrees.

Hence we are given to understand thus much. That such as suffer themselves to be held under decrees (that either are, or seeme to bee derived from the ceremoniall Law) and to be bound in conscience unto them, carry themselves as men that deny the death of Christ, and as such as have no fruit or benefit by his death. This is cleere from the text: and with this, agrees that of the Apostle, Gal. 5. 2. *If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing: if ye subiect your selves to circumcision, or any of the old legall ceremonies, Christ shall profit you nothing*.

The reason is plaine: Christ by his coming and death, put an end to all those ceremonies, therefore still to retaine any of them, yea, any thing that is, or seemes thence

Doff. 4.
Such as subiect
themselves to
decrees, that
either are, or
seeme to be
derived from
the ceremoni-
all Law, carry
themselves as
men that deny
the death of
Christ.
Reason.

thence to be derived as a thing necessarie to salvation, is to make Christ unprofitable: how then can the Papists justify their decrees of not touching, not tasting, of abstaining from some kinde of meates, and from marriage, of not handling money, and the like, besides the badge of Antichristian Apostasie, which the Apostle hath laid on them? 1 Tim. 4. 3. how can they free those their decrees from being such as evacuate and make void Christ his death? It will not serve their turne to say, their decrees are not the same with the legall ceremonies, and that their Church decrees not abstinence from this or that thing as uncleane (though indeed they doe: for they place holinesse and part of Gods worship, in such abstinence, and so condemne that kinde of meat at that time as uncleane by their prohibition,) but they cannot so shift off the matter. By their decrees of abstinence from meat, and the like (being taken from the ceremoniall Law of Moses, and urged on the conscience, as necessarie to salvation:) they doe (as much as in them is) nullifie and make void the death of Christ; and they that subject themselves to such decrees, carrie themselves as men that deny Christ his death, and thereby prove themselves to have no part nor benefit by his death: yea, if any amongst us (superstitiously minded) doe submit himselfe to any ordinance or decree of our Church, with a minde and opinion of holinesse and serving of God therein: for example. If any have this conceit, that by not tasting of flesh at times forbidden by our Church, hee serves God, and is made more holy in the sight of God: let them know, that such a subjection is a deniall of Christ his death, and a renouncing of the fruit and benefit of Christ his death. Come wee to the 21. verse, where our Apostle speaks in the person of false teachers, and in imitation of them saith thus.

Use.
Many popish decrees evacuate and make void the death of Christ.
A popish cavil.

Answer to it.

Ver. 21. Touch not, taste not, handle not.

IN this verse he doth specifye their decrees, and expresse them particularly in their owne words, as if hee had said, Why are yee held under the decrees of false teachers; as namely these, they say unto you, *Touch not, taste not, handle not*. Some expound these words as spoken of divers things: as, *touch not* a dead corps, *taste not* of this or that kinde of meate, *handle not* holy vessels, and the like. But I take it they may more fitly be understood as all spoken of the same thing, namely of meates: *Touch not, taste not, handle not*, this or that kinde of meate: for that is more agreeable to the context, and to the words of this verse: and that matter of meates did put the faithfull of those times (both teachers: and others) to much businesse and trouble, both in regard of the zeale that some had by legall ceremonies, and in respect of continuall use of meat and drinke. [*Touch not*] The originall word translated (*touch*) signifies either to touch, or to eat, yet but a little; and these words [*touch not*] may thus be understood; *eat not, no not a little, or touch not with thy teeth, or chew not with thy mouth*: [*taste not*] that is a further degree of prohibition, doe not so much as taste with thy mouth: then followes a third degree yet higher, [*handle not*] doe not lay thine hand on this or that kinde of meate. Thus then conceive we these words; *chew not in thy mouth, taste not with thy tongue, nor lay thine hand on this or that kinde of meat*.

Interpretation

Now here first wee are to marke, that the Apostle having said in generall in the verse before, *be not burthened with traditions*, be not held under the decrees of men: in this verse he subioynes their particular decrees of touching meates; and he gives instance and example onely of them, *be not burthened with traditions*, as namely, *touch not, taste not, handle not*, this or that kind of meat. No doubt hee might have insisted in many other things, but hee thought it most needfull to stand against their superstitious decrees concerning meates, as most dangerous to the Colossians.

Hence

Dott. 5.
Satan doth
dangerously
tempt and en-
snare the souls
of men in re-
spect of meat
and drinke.

Reasons.

1

2

Note.

Vse.

We are to
watch over
our hearts that
sinne doe not
creep upon
us in time of
our eating and
drinking.

Note.

Hence we may gather this conclusion, That as Satan and his instruments doe ensnare the soules of men in many outward things, so, not with the least danger in or about their meates and drinckes.

Satan (the enemy of our salvation) is ever tempting, and that dangerously in respect of meate and drinke, either on the right hand or on the left, either to abstaine, as did these false teachers, or else to exceed: he began this kind of temptation betimes. Our first parents were no sooner created and placed in Paradise, but he presently began to tempt them about meate; and from that time to this, he never resteth laying snares to entrap us, even in, or about our meat and drinke, and he knowes this temptation to bee of great force. Therefore hee laid it against him that was most strong, thinking to prevaile (but in vaine) even against our Saviour himselfe, Mar. 4. 6. And the reason why Satans temptation in, or about meate and drinke is so dangerous are these.

First, it is a thing wee use, and must use daily, and if we want it, without the speciall grace of God, we are ready to use any unlawfull meanes to get it, as the saying is, hunger will breake stone walles, it will make men (wanting grace) to breake through the commandements of God, by lying, swearing, stealing, and what not that they may be satisfied.

Againe, if wee have it, wee are not only prone to abuse it in a most high degree: witnesse the practice of beastly drunkards, who not onely glory in their strength to powre in strong drink, but will bestow much cost on others, to make them of their owne wretched condition, even drunken like themselves, that they may sport and laugh at them.

And herein the devill hath prevailed further than in many other finnes. Who will bestow cost on others to make them sinne in any kind, only to make themselves merry? Indeed for their profit or credit wicked men will hire others to lie and to sweare falsely for them: but for sport and merriment only, who will be at any great cost in making others to sinne, except onely in drunkenesse. This shewes plainly, that the devils temptation, in, or about meate or drinke, is exceeding powerfull and dangerous, and that hee many times prevaileth therein very farre in bringing men to an high degree of sinne.

Our care then must be to take heed we be not overtaken with sinne, in things of so necessary use as our meat and drinke: we are to watch over our hearts, and to have a godly feare in our hearts, in the time of our eating and drinking. *S. Iude* doth tax some in his time for want of this, *ver. 12. They feast with you (saith hee) without feare, feeding themselves*; and especially wee are to have this feare in our hearts in time of feasting, when we come to a table furnished with store and variety of meates: it is the counsell of the Wise man, *Prou. 23. 3.* that at such a time we be not desirous of the dainty meat, it is deceiveable. To feast together is not unlawfull: holy *Iob* suffered his children so to doe: but afterward he called them together and sanctified them, and offered burnt offerings for them; for *Iob* thought, *Iob 1. 5. It may be that my sonnes have sinned and blasphemed God in their hearts, in time of their feasting.*

And thus are wee to have a godly ieaousie and suspicion of our owne selves, that sinne doe not intermingle it selfe with our pleasaunt eating and drinking, and that then our affections doe not settle and rest too much on the sweetnesse of our meates and drinckes, and that wee forget not God the giver, that wee forget not the hunger and thirst of our poore brethren. *Amos 6. 6.* and that wee exceed not measure in eating and drinking. And that our hearts may bee possessed with this godly feare and ieaousie, let us remember what a grievous thing it is when our table is a snare to us: it is one branch of that prayer that was made against the malicious enemies of the Church, *Psalm 96. ver. 22. Let their feet bee a snare before them*: Thus it shall bee to us, unless wee watch over our hearts in our eating and drinking: even our meates and drinckes shall bee snares

unto

unto us. Withall we are to remember, that we abusing the creatures of God (our meates and drinks) the Lord doth many times secretly tunc them even to the hurt of our bodies: good gifts which hee hath ordained for the preservation of nature, being abused, through the Leechs iust iudgement, are sometimes turned to the choaking and overturning of nature in us: for it is iust with the Lord, wherein men sinne, therein for the most part to punish them: it therefore standeth us in hand, if wee respect the good of our owne soules or bodies, not to let our hearts loose in time of eating and drinking, but to bee wary and circumspect, even in receiving our ordinary diet, but especially when wee come to a feast, take heed that then forgetfulness of God, or our brethren, exccesse, or any other sinne, doe not intermingle it selfe with our eating and drinking.

In the next place, in that false teachers among the *Colossians* were content to say, touch not, or eat not, of this or that kind of meat, but they proceeded further, to forbid the tastig of certaine meates: I might shew you how restless the minds of superstitious persons are, they bee never content with the number of their owne devised orders and decrees. Thus it is at this day among the Papists, one order, one decree is ever and anon invented among their Monkes, and others of that rable which they call religious, but I will not stand on that point: Observe wee the manner these false teachers used in putting forth their decrees: they put them forth in the singular number, touch not, or thou shalt not touch, thou shalt not taste, thou shalt not handle, that they might reach every particular, and in the negative, which is of more force than the affirmative, they would have them binde as strictly as Gods commandements.

Hence wee are to note their curiosity, I cannot properly call it care, but their curiosity and strictnesse in providing that there should be no meddling at all with meates they supposed to be uncleane, that men should not touch them, nor taske of them: nor handle them, and this strictnesse was not proper to those false teachers alone, but hath beene found in all ages and times. The Apostle saith, Gal. 6. 21. that false teachers were so earnest and forward in urging circumcision on the *Galatians*, that they constrained them to bee circumcised.

Now, this is not to bee passed by without profit to our selves: let us therefore thinke on it to this purpose: are false teachers so strict in causing, if possibly they may, their followers to take heed of the least touch, or least meddling with that they fancy to be uncleane? Oh, then how much more ought we to bee carefull, and (if you will be) curious, in avoiding that which is indeed uncleane, (namely) all manner of sinnes: yea, we ought in this respect to bee so strict, as wee are not to touch any meanes, or any occasion leading unto it: nor to come into the company of such as are notorious wicked persons, more then we must needs in respect of the bond of nature, of office, of place and calling, nor carelesly to come into their company, for that is to touch pitch, and it cannot chuse but defile us. Peter in bad company denyed his Master; and hitherto wee may truly apply that of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 6. 17. Touch none uncleane thing; and that also of Iude, verie 23. Hate even the garment spotted by the flesh: it is too much boldnesse in some who carelesly sort themselves with any company.

And againe, some thinke they may without danger, attire themselves like wantons, garishly, and may safely use filthy and rotten speech at their pleasure: these they thinke are things not to bee stood on; And it is too much strictnesse to make conscience of them; but what saith the Apostle? Ephes. 5. 3. Fornication, and all uncleannesse, or covetousnesse, let it not bee once named among you, as it becommeth Saints; the Apostle would have us not to touch them

M

The workes
of the
flesh

The mindes
of superstitious
persons are
restlesse.

Dole. 2.

False teachers
are very curi-
ous and strict
in causing
their followers
to avoid the
least touch of
things they
suppose to be
uncleane.

Vse 1.

We are to bee
carefull, and
indeed curious
in avoiding all
manner of sin.

Vse 2.

Reprooffe of
such as thinke
they may with-
out danger
meddle with
sinnes.

Note.

Sinne makes
sure worke.

them with the tip of our tongues. And there is reason for it. It is a dangerous thing but to put on the counterfeit of sinne, and for a man to be but *personatus peccator*, to play the part of a sinner, as many foolishly thinke: oh they will but dally with sinne, they will but make themselves merry with a few ribould termes, they will but touch sinne and put it from them, before they enter into the grosse practise of it. Such persons as thus speake, or thus think, they are not acquainted with the corruption of their owne nature; they must learne to know, that if sinne bee sweet in their mouthes, and they delight to speake of it, certainly they will favour it, and not forsake it till it turne to poyson in their bowels; as Zophar saith, Job 10. 12. Yea let them know they might as safely drinke up strong poyson and prescribe it a measure how farre it shall worke: for why? whereas they say or thinke they will but sport themselves with sinne for a time, and they will leave it when they please; they must know that sinne makes sure worke having once seized on them: it will hold them and that fast by the heart, yea their will it selfe is kept in hold and bondage, and cannot bee delivered till the Lord with his powerfull hand of grace doe deliver it.

Therefore fancy not to thy selfe, thou wilt but touch sinne for a time and then leave it: No, no, learne to feare alwayes, bee afraid to come neere the borders of sinne, flie from it as thou wouldest from one sicke of the plague, whose breath thou wilt avoid, and the needlesse touching of any thing about him: be not thou like the foole spoken of, Prov. 14. 16. who ragerh and is carelesse, who hath neither quicke sight to espie and foresee the occasions of sinne, nor care to shun them, but goes on securely till some heavy iudgement overtake them.

Verf. 22. Which all perish with the using, and are after the commandements and doctrine of men.

IN this verse our Apostle brings two other arguments to dissuade the Colossians from suffering themselves to bee held under the decrees of men (of not touching, tasting, or handling this or that kind of meat.)

The first is from the condition of things, about which their decrees were in these words, (*which all perish with the using*) it may thus be conceived. Such decrees as are of transitory things, the observation whereof hath no force nor strength to salvation and to life everlasting, you are not to place holinesse and religion in them: but such are these decrees (touch not, taste not, handle not) and that is laid downe in the prooffe of it: these are of things vanishing and passing away with the using of them, they endure no longer: therefore you are not to place holinesse and religion in them.

The second argument is from the efficient cause of such decrees of men: that they were the commandements of men, and therefore they should not suffer themselves to be held under them.

Of these in order. (*Which all perish with the using*:) that is, all which touching, tasting, and handling, together with the things to bee touched, tasted, and handled, (*perish with the using*) the words signifie (are to corruption in the use) the meaning is, are consumed in the use, or are corruptible, and endure no longer than the very use of them, and both they and the use of them doe vanish and passe away with the time.

Now here first the argument of the Apostle is to bee considered, in that hee reasoneth thus: That the decrees of false teachers were of things perishing, and passing away with the use of them: and therefore the Colossians ought not to place holinesse in them. Hence we are given to understand thus much,

That holinesse, religion, and the worship of God, consisteth not in vanishing things

Interpre-
tation.

Doctrine 1.

things, it is not in things that paſſe away with the uſing, and are onely appointed for our uſe in this mortall life, as in meat and drinke, in dayes, in apparell, and the like, theſe things of themſelves, make us not more or leſſe holy in the ſight of God. I ſay theſe things of themſelves; we may not ſinne, and that grievouſly in the uſe of ſuch things, and wee may pleaſe God in the moderate and ſober uſe of them; but the things of themſelves, or actions about them conſidered by themſelves, doe not make us more or leſſe holy. 1 Cor. 8. 8. The Apoſtle ſaith plainly, meat maketh not us acceptable to God; for neither if wee eate, have we the more, neither if we eat not, have we the leſſe. The meaning is more or leſſe piety and religion, or are more or leſſe pleaſing to God, Rom. 14. 17. The Apoſtle ſaith, the kingdome of God is not meat nor drinke (that is) religion and the power of it, ſtandeth not in meat and drink, but in righteouſneſſe, and peace, and joy in the holy Ghoſt,

The reaſon is this, becauſe godlineſſe and religion, as the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 Tim. 4. 8. is profitable, it is of uſe to all things having the promiſe, both of this life and that which iſt to come.

Now meat and drinke and other outward things, being appointed onely for the uſe and neceſſity of the body, they reach no further than this life, the vertue and efficacy of them doth not extend it ſelfe any further than to this preſent life; therefore the godlineſſe and religion cannot ſtand in them.

It will be ſaid, doth not religion and the worſhip of God conſiſt in any vaniſhing thing, in any thing that paſſeth away with the uſing; what ſay you then to the waſhing of water in Baptiſme, and to eating and drinking at the Lords Table, doe not theſe things paſſe away with the time?

I anſwer, indeed the outward and bodily actions are ended with the time of uſing, but the force and efficacy of theſe actions reacheth further, even to ſignifie and ſeale up grace to life everlaſting: they are ordained of God to ſignifie and ſeale up grace to life eternall and availeable to that purpoſe and therefore not to be eſteemed as things vaniſhing and paſſing away with the uſe of them. But for the point in hand, I hope it is cleare, that Religion and the worſhip of God conſiſteth not in things vaniſhing and paſſing away with the time.

And firſt, this meetes with an error of the Papiſts, who place a principall part of Gods worſhip in the uſe of outward vaniſhing things: they hold it a great part of holineſſe and religion, to weare this or that kinde of habit, to abſtaine from one kinde of meat and to eat another; it is a ſtrange thing that men ſhould be ſo ſimple, eſpecially, that men of underſtanding ſhould be ſo overſeene, as to perſwade themſelves that the very uſing of this or that outward thing, the abſtaining from this or that kinde of meat, ſhould make any thing to eternall life, that a thing corruptible in it ſelfe and conſumed in the uſe, and having no further uſe, but naturall, (for the preſent neceſſity of the body) ſhould any thing availe to life everlaſting. This is a ſtrange thing but that by the juſt iudgment of God they are given over to themſelves.

For the uſe of the point to our ſelves, is it ſo that religion ſtandeth not in vaniſhing things, in ſuch things, as paſſe away with the uſing of them? then, I beſeech you, let us every one looke that our religion (for we will bee held ſuch as have religion and ſuch as worſhip God in ſpirit and truth) Let us therefore look that our religion, be not in things vaniſhing, tranſitory, and paſſing away with the time; there is no doubt, but moſt of us, if not all of us, can diſcerne the groſſeneſſe of popery, and cry ſhame on it, in placing religion in not touching, not taſting, or not handling this or that kind of outward thing; yet we our ſelves (many of us) have no other religion, but even that which is found in vaniſhing things, in things, paſſing away together with the time: for what elſe is our formall hearing of the word, our receiving of the Sacraments of cuſtome, and for faſhion, our prayers uttered with the mouth, when our hearts are wandring

Tranſitory things of this life doe not of themſelves make us more or leſſe holy in Gods ſight.

Reason.

Obj. 2.

Answer.

Uſe 1.

Confutation of the Papiſts placing a chiefe part of Gods worſhip in the uſe of outward things.

Uſe 2.

Wee muſt look that our religion be not in vaniſhing things.

dring farre from God, yea the iudgements of God being upon us in plague, unreasonable weather, and such like? Will not wee sometimes confesse, and say, these things are come on us for our sinnes? and yet what is such confession in the most of us, but a vanishing thing, a fleeting motion, even a thing passing away with our breath, and the speaking of it. Wee have not any true sense and feeling of our sinnes, neither will we (as we ought) come to any particular sinne of our owne, confessing that to have deserved such a iudgement: what then is this but to place our religion in things vanishing, and passing away with the time? Indeed I confesse that hearing the Word, and receiving the Sacraments are not vanishing things in themselves, they have use both in good and bad: in the one sort to life and salvation, in the other to iudgement and condemnation: but being formally used, they are vanishing things, in respect of their saving and comfortable use: they passe away with the time in respect of that use, wee are not bettered by them, wee have no profit by them to life and salvation; and if wee place our religion in a formall hearing of the word, or receiving the Sacraments, and thinke wee are religious in so doing, surely, our religion is not sound, it is but hypocrisie, let us take knowledge of it, and let us not thinke it sufficient, if wee come to the Church, heare the word, and receive the Sacraments: unlesse wee finde these exercises of holinesse, and of the worship of God, powerfull in working grace in us, and of comfortable use to our owne salvation: yea, let us ever looke that our religion bee sound in things permanent, and such as have use to life everlasting, as in faith, hope, love to God and men, humility, patience, and in workes of mercie: for these indeed passe not away with the using, but endure to life everlasting, though the action of them bee transient, and passe away with the time, yet being done by a true beleever, one that is in Christ, the good of it remaines after the action, yea, the good of it shall follow him, when all things in the world forsake him, for they leave him at the grave, but that shall follow him to heaven, as saith the holy Ghost, and that is a notable inducement to stirre us up to the doing of good, and to the practice of religion in this manner.

In the next place, from the matter of this reason of the Apostle, in that hee saith (*which all perish with the using*) meaning meates forbidden by the Law of Moses, and the touching, tasting, and handling of them; wee may easily see this conclusion layd before us; that food of the body, corporall meat and drinke, and the actions about them in the use of them, namely, eating & drinking passe away with the time, and reach no further than the time of this life; I need not spend much time in proving this point, it will easily be confessed to bee a truth. Matth. chap. 15. vers. 17. our Saviour hath set it downe as a generall conclusion, that *whatsoever entereth into the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast into the draught, it perisheth and is consumed.* 1 Cor. 6. 13. the Apostle saith, *Meats are ordained for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them,* (to wit, in respect of eating and drinking) and shall cause these actions to cease, and the use the belly hath in time of this life: for in the life to come there shall be no use of meat or drinke, we shall be as the Angels of God in heaven. What is our use of this point?

Surely, that which our Saviour hath taught us, Ioh. 6. 27. That wee *labour not for the meate which perisheth, but for that meate that endureth to everlasting life.* A duty wherein most of us are much wanting, wee labour and toyle, and spend the strength of our bodies in seeking onely after bodily food, and have little or no care to seeke after the food that endureth to eternall life: yea, many are so eager in seeking after the food of their bodies, that they will have it though it bee with the losse of Gods favour, and with the breach of a good conscience, witnesse that buying of trifles, pears and apples, and such like on the Sabbath day; this argues we care not for any other thing, but that we may have

Vse.
We are not to labour for the meate that perisheth, but for that which endureth to life everlasting.

have to fill our bellies, let as many as are thus minded, whose belly is their God, Phillip. 3. 19. let them know that this sinne is highly displeasing to God, yea such a sinne as brings downe Gods curse on all that they have in speciall manner: for so the Lord hath threatned, Ierem. 17. 27. *If ye will not heare me so sanctifie the Sabbath day &c.* Let us then know that we are no gainers by breaking the Sabbath, we thinke we get much by it, but the Lord will either consume our goods with fire, or send a curse that like an unquenchable fire shall devoure all that we have. Let us then labour to keepe the Lords Sabbath holy, and to bestow it in holy exercises, and on that day especially to labour and seeke after that meate that endureth to life everlasting: this is that one thing absolutely needfull spoken of, Luke the 10. and verf. 42. *Maries part*: though the entertainment of Christ was as necessary as any outward businesse, yet not necessary in respect of this one thing, for without this a man cannot be saved, which he may without any thing else having this.

Note.

Come wee now to the arguments of the Apostle being three in number, by which he dissuades the Colossians from submitting themselves to the decrees of false teachers in the words following (*and are after the commandements and doctrines of men.*)

Objection.

The first argument is from the efficient cause of these decrees (namely) men, that they were the fruits of mens braines, and therefore they ought not to place religion in the obsecration of them. Now touching this argument, a doubt must be removed before we come to the words of it (namely) this. It may seeme by the argument, that the traditions and decrees of men before spoken of (verse the twentieth) were such as were merely invented and devised by the braine of men, and not (as we said) such as were derived from the ceremoniall Law of Moses, for then they should not be said to be commandements and doctrines of men.

A double propounded.

For removall of this scruple we must call to minde that which we have often heard: that the rites and ceremonies of the Law were to endure but for a time, namely, for the time of the old Testament, till the coming and death of Christ: hee being come in the flesh, their time was out in regard of the observation of them: therefore to deliver things derived from thence as necessary now to be observed, is no precept of God but of man though before the coming of Christ they were things commanded by God himselfe, yet now being abrogated, to derive any thing from thence as necessary to be observed, may be truly said to be no precept of God, but of men: we may easily conceive this by the like. It is Gods law that a woman should bee bound to her husband so long as he lives, and hee being dead then to be free from him: so saith the Apostle, Romans 7. verse 2. Now then if men by their commandements binde her to him after he is dead, and decree, that she is still bound to him, and that it is unlawfull for her to take another man to her husband; surely, that is not Gods Law, but a commandement and decree of men: so is it in this case. The people of God being bound to the things prescribed in the Law of Moses, but for a time, if men decree that they are still bound to them as before, that time being expired, that is not Gods commandement, but the commandement and doctrine of men: and so this argument makes nothing against my former exposition, that by traditions we are to understand decrees of men derived from the ceremoniall Law of Moses. The words of this argument have no difficulty in them, they are to bee conceived according to the proper signification of them, and the meaning of the Apostle in them is,

Answ.

That the decrees of men, of not touching, not tasting, not handling, though they seemed to be decrees derived from the ceremoniall Law of Moses, yet indeed they were onely the commandements and teachings of men, and had no ground nor warrant from the word of God.

We are in the first place to consider the argument it self, in that the Apostle reasoneth thus: That the Colossians should not be held under those decrees of false teachers, of not touching, not tasting, not handling, as things of necessary observation unto their salvation, because they were precepts and commandments of men, having no ground in the word of God; wee are plainly taught thus much:

Doctr. 3.

That men can give no precepts nor rules (without warrant from the word of God) of necessary observation to life everlasting. Rules given by men not grounded on Gods word in case of religion, in matters of faith and manners are not of any moment, or of any necessity: we are not necessarily bound to the observation of them, as things needfull to life and salvation.

Reasons.

The reasons of this are manifest.

First, mans eye is not onely dimme or bleered, but starke blind in heavenly things; therefore men can give no direction for the way to life eternall.

Secondly, the written word of God contains all things needfull to be known, beleaved or practised, and is sufficiently able to make wise to salvation, 2 Tim. 3. 15. Therefore other rules beside that, are needlesse, and if any be given as needfull to salvation, we are not bound to observe them. This I note in a word, to let us see what we are to deeme of the unwritten traditions of the Papists, of their rules of abstinence from meat and drinke, marriage and the like, which they urge on men as things of necessary observation, and say the breach of them is a damnable and a deadly sin. We are to know their is no necessity in the observation of them, but rather indeed the observation of such decrees and precepts is dangerous, yea, it is damnable and deadly to observe them, as the Papists would have men to observe them with opinion of necessity, and of merit, and as part of holiness and religion.

Vse.

The observation of popish unwritten traditions is dangerous and damnable.

Obiect.

Why (but say they) did not the Apostles, Act. 15. 28. 29. impose it as a necessary law and decree on the Gentiles converted, that they should abstaine from things offered to Idols, and blood, and that that is strangled and from fornication? they say it seemed good to the holy Ghost and to us, to lay no more burthen upon you than these necessary things? the things there spoken of: some of them (being ceremoniall) were abrogated by the death of Christ, and yet they call them necessary things, they having decreed the observation of them.

Answer.

They call them necessary, not because they were by their decree in that manner necessary as they were under the Law, but in respect of the edification of the weak: for charity did require that the Gentiles converted should not use their eating of blood and things strangled among their weak brethren the Jewes, and thereby cause them to stumble and to be offended: but rather it was necessary that they should abstaine from that liberty, for the edification of their brethren, and that is the meaning of the Apostles in saying (these necessary things) and so the Papists have hereby no advantage for maintaining any necessity in their rules and decrees, nor warranted by the word of God.

Observe we further that the Apostle in propounding this argument saith not onely *after the commandments*, but adds to that (and *doctrines of men*) no doubt of purpose to avoid an exception that the Colossians might insly make: for if hee had said onely after the commandments of men, they might have said indeed, these decrees of not touching, not tasting, not handling, are the commandments of men, but yet it may be they are the doctrines of God, they are commanded by men we confesse, but haply taught of God: now to take away all occasion of such exception, the Apostle saith, they were both the commandments and doctrines of men.

Doctr. 4.

Some commandments of men are some

Hence wee are put in minde of a difference of mens commandments: Some are the commandments of men, and are also the doctrines of men (as were these decrees of false teachers) and not taught of God at all in his word, either expressly

expressely, or by necessary consequence: and these we are to renounce, and not to yeeld obedience unto. Other commandments of men there bee, which are also taught of God, and to them wee are to yeeld obedience. For example, it is the commandment of man, that wee assemble our selves publikely to heare the Word: and this also is a thing commanded of God, and wee are bound to submit our selves to this commandment of man; and if we doe not, the Magistrate may lawfully compell us: as it is said of good King *Ioshab*, *2 Chron. 17. 19.* hee caused all that were found in *Jerusalem*, and *Benjamin*, even all his subjects to stand to the covenant he had made: yea, *verf. 23.* it is said, hee compelled all that were found in *Israel* to serve the Lord his God.

And this meets with that cavill of the Brownists, against the constitution and planting of our Church in this land. They say we have no Church truly planted, and why so? because (say they) your Church was gathered only by the commandment of the Magistrate, after Popery was put downe: men were compelled by the Magistrate to make profession of the faith, and their profession was not voluntary.

Ans. It is meere untruth, to say that the true members of the Church in this land were gathered by the commandment of the Magistrate, and compelled to make true profession of the faith; the Magistrate never stoke on him that power to compell men to beleve, or to make true profession of that faith that was wrought by the spirit of Christ working by the Word: indeed the Magistrate did onely that he might lawfully doe; yea, that which he was commanded to doe, that is, command the Word publikely to be preached, and men so assemble themselves to the hearing of it, which was a meane to make men of unwilling to become willing to beleve and to professe the faith; the word preached, was that which from time to time wrought faith in the hearts of true belevers: therefore our Church in this land is truly gathered and planted, say the Brownists what they can to the contrary. Come we to *verf. 23.*

Verf. 23. Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom, in voluntary religion, and humbleness of mind, and in not sparing the body, neither have they in any station to satisfy the flesh.

In this verse the Apostle doth prevent and answer an objection, that some might make in defence of their decrees here spoken against. For happily some might say, that the decrees before spoken against by the Apostle, seemed to bee very wise and worthy decrees, and therefore not to be so lightly regarded as the Apostle would have them.

To this hee answers: first, by way of a generall concession, that indeed they had a shew of wisdom: and then hee doth expresse in particular wherein that shew of wisdom consisted, namely, in three things. In voluntary religion, in humbleness of mind, and in not sparing the body.

In the last words of the verse hee answers directly to the objection, and removes it by force of reason: what his argument is, I will lay forth when I come to the words.

Let us now speake something of the generall concession in the first words, [which things have indeed a shew of wisdom] that is, which decrees [aboveindicated] that is, certainly and truly [a shew of wisdom]. To omit other exceptions of the word [shew] it here signifies an appearance or colour of wisdom, opposed to the truth of wisdom: and so the meaning of the Apostle is this. Which decrees have certainly an appearance of wisdom, they seeme indeed to be wise and to be worthy decrees. We are here to marke that the Apostle saith, the decrees of false teachers, being (as he said) the Commandments and doctrines of men, having no ground in the word of God, yet they had a shew of wisdom.

Hence

mens doctrines and not to be obeyed, other commandments of men there be which are also taught of God and to them obedience is due.

Vse.

Confutation of the Brownists touching the constitution and planting of our Church in England.

Object.

Answer

Interpretation.

Dollrine 1. Things not grounded on the word of God, yea things contrary unto it, may carry a shew of holy wisdom.

Vse. We are to take heed that a shew of wisdom deceive us not, and make us do things contrary to the word of God.

Note.

Hence then we may easily take up this conclusion. That things that have no ground in the word of God; yea things contrary to the Word, may have a shew of wisdom, yea of holy and religious wisdom, 1 Sam. 15. 3, we finde that when *Saul* had an expresse commandement of God to smite *Amaleck*, and all that pertained unto them: and to have no compassion on them, but to slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, both ox and sheepe, both camell and asse; it seemed rather wisdom to doe to the contrary, even to spare of the best of the sheepe and oxen, yea, godly and religious wisdom, that he might have wherewith to offer sacrifice. This I might further shew by many particulars: and for the ground of this, it is the subtilty of Satan, as by many meanes to draw to error, so by this at not of the least force, even by deluding of the mind and judgment, by making that seeme wisdom and goodnesse, which indeed is full of folly and sinner.

Our use of this point, is this, We are to take heed we be not deceived, and by the shew of wisdom bee brought to doe that which is contrary to the will and word of God. Some take liberty to sinne upon this ground: oh, say they, many wise men doe this or that, and why may not we also doe it? and being reprov'd for doing so, they will not sticke to say to the reprov'r, as wise men as your selfe doe thus. It is indeed a plausible and powerfull argument, yea it is more plausible and powerfull to say, many ancient wise men doe thus; therefore why may not I doe it? than to say many doe it, and therefore I may doe it. This latter is the argument of such as have no feare of God before their eyes; but the other is the argument of such as seeme to have some religion in them: yea, the devill knowes the force of this argument: and therefore we find (which is worthy observation, Act. 12. 50.) that hee stirred up certaine devout and honorable women, and the chiefe men of the City, and raised persecution against *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and expelled them out of their coasts: that others seeing such wise, grave, and devout persons carried against them, they might by their example bee more encouraged to doe the like, and so give a greater blow to the cause of God. I say therefore it is a plausible and powerfull argument, to say many wise men doe so, therefore why may not I doe it?

But let us take heed we be not led by the example of any, bee they never so wise, to breake the Sabbath, to use gaming, swearing, this or that foolish fashion in attire, or any other thing that the word of God doth not allow. And let us know that though men doing these things be very wise, yet that is no part of their wisdom to doe so: and why then should we follow them in that in which they are not wise?

And remember that their practice may lead thee to doe as they doe, but it cannot preserve either them or thee, from the reward of that sinne; therefore look not who they be that doe this or that, but what warrant they have for the doing of it, and how well they are like to speed for their doing: be not carried away with a shew of wisdom to doe anything contrary to the wisdom and will of God revealed in his word, let that bee thy guide and direction in all things.

Come we to the particulars wherein this appearance of wisdom consisteth, expressly set downe by the Apostle in the words following, namely, *Voluntary religion and humbleness of mind, and in not sparing the body.* The decrees of false teachers before spoken of, seemed to be wise and excellent, in that in the practise of them there was voluntary religion, and humbleness of minde, and not sparing the body.

In voluntary religion. By voluntary religion, we are to understand such religion, and such worship of God, as is not willed and commanded by God in his word, but is from the will of man, and may be called wil-worship, or indeed superstition, that is, as that word [*superstition*] doth signifie, *supra statum*, more than

Interpretation.

than is appointed by God in his word, when men doe that which they are not bound to, by Gods commandement, and thinke that in so doing they worship God, that is, *voluntary religion, and humbleness of mind*. By [*humbleness of mind*] in this place is meant submission, and stooping downe lower than Gods commandement, even a subjection to the commandements and decrees of men [*and in not sparing the body*] that is in one word, in hard usage of the body, in rigorous and severe dealing with the body, in macerating, vexing and afflicting of the body, by with-holding from it necessary sustenance and convenient regard.

Thus then conceive we these words, as if the Apostle had said, Those decrees of not touching, nor tasting, nor handling, seeme to be wise and of great worth, in that in the practise of them, men give free will-worship to God, and doe that which they are bound not to doe; yea, more than God hath commanded them to doe, and they stoope lower than the commandements of God, and in humility yeeld obedience and subjection to the commandements of men, and they sticke not even to macerate, vex, and afflict, and to deale hardly with their owne bodies.

Now here in the first place, in that the Apostle doth grant, that a shew of wisdom consisted in voluntary religion, and that decrees of men seemed to be wise and worthy decrees, for that in the practice of them there was voluntary religion.

We may plainly see this conclusion laid before us, that will-worship carries with it a shew of wisdom, such worship and service of God as is not willed by God, but is wholly from the will of man, seemes to be wise and worthy service, and men seeme to be wise in offering to God voluntary worship and service. Thus we read, 1 Sam. 13. 11. 12. that when *Saul* had rashly and hastily presumed to offer a burnt offering, which was more than hee ought to have done; yet it seemed to him he had done wisely, and a good piece of service to God: yea, he went about to perswade *Samuel* that hee had done very well and wisely: saith he, *I saw the people were scattered from me, and thou canst not with- in the dayes appointed, and therefore I said, the Philistines will come upon us, and wee shall be forced to ioyne battell with our enemies, and have not made supplica- tion unto the Lord; I was bold therefore, and offered a burnt offering. I was bold there- fore* (saith *Saul*) as if he had said, It was indeed more than I ought to have done; I was bold to doe it, I did it of mine head, and of mine owne voluntary minde I offered a burnt offering; but I thinke in so doing I did well and wisely, I had great reason for it. This (no doubt) was the drift of *Sauls* speech: and thus doth will-worship (such service of God as men fancy to be good) many times carry be- fore it a shew of wisdom, and reason: yea (as one saith well) many poynts of superstition have so much shew of reason for them, that (without Gods com- mandement to the contrary) a wise man might thinke them very fit meanes of Gods worship, and meritorious: how then may we profit by the knowledge of this poynt? surely thus:

First, it may teach us not to stand amazed, nor to wonder at it, that men lear- ned and wise, are (as it were) wedded to superstition. The learned among the Papists doe exceedingly dore upon their devised worship, and their workes (as they call them) of supererogation, workes not commanded, but over and above the commandement, as high and excellent services of God, and such as merit greater glory in heaven: they plead for them, and doe wonderfully please them- selves in them: we are not to marvell at it, for therein they seeme to be wise; yea therein they perswade themselves they goe beyond other in profoundness of wisdom.

Again, is it so that will-worship (such as is not willed by God, but is merely from the will of man) doth carry before it such a shew of wisdom and reason? let us then take heed wee leane not too much to humane wisdom and reason

Doct. 2.
Will-worship
carries a shew
of wisdom.

Vse 1.
It ought not to
trouble us, that
men learned
and wise are
many times
wedded to su-
perstition.

Vse 2.
We must take
heed that wee
lean not too

much to humane wisdom and reason in Gods worship and service.

reason and in the worship and service of God; if wee doe, we are to be carried away to superstition, and to serve God not according to his will, but after our owne fancy.

Reason will tell us that any kind of good service offered to God out of our owne good meaning and devotion, is pleasing to God; for so doe ignorant and superstitious persons pleade for themselves, that they doe this or that out of a good mind and meaning.

For example: they comming into a Church, not in time of publike worship, but at another time, they fall downe on their knees, and pray to the Lord, and they hold that to be an high and holy service of God, and why? their owne reason tells them the place is appoynted for the worship of God, and they are better in minde of God in that place, and their prayers are more pleasing to God in that place than in another: and thus are men carried away with a shew of reason, to doe that which the Lord never required of them.

Objection.

But it will be said, may wee not pray when wee come into a Church, is it a thing unlawfull.

Ans.

No, it is not, we may pray in all places, according to the rule of the Apostle, 1 Tim. chap. 2. vers. 8. *I will therefore that the men pray every where*: but to pray in Church out of the time of publike worship, with respect had to the place, with the opinion that we are more bound to pray in that place than in another: and with a conceit that God will sooner heare us in that place than in another, that is grosse superstition, and utterly unlawfull: for the Lords worship is not bound to any one place, neither is God nearer, nor more ready to heare in a Church than in another place, out of the time of publike worship. As for that they say, the place doth strike into them a reverence of God, and better put them in mind of God: that is iust as the Papists plead for their images, and therein they notably discover their own corruption, in that they must needs have such helpes (as God never appointed) to put them in mind of God: all these are but colourable shifts of mans owne reason: and we are to take heed that wee bee not led away by reason, and to offer that to the Lord as good service, which hee hath never commanded.

A doubt propounded.

Before we passe to the next thing, a doubt is to bee removed, which haply may rise in the mindes of some; I will briefly propound, and resolve it: the doubt is this.

It is a received and sound truth, that all true beleeuers are a free and voluntary people, that yeeld obedience, worship, and service to God voluntarily, as if there were no Law to compell them; they have Christ living in them, and the spirit of life raigning in them. Rom. chap. 8. vers. 2. and so their religion and service of God is voluntary. It may seeme then that men may iustly stand on voluntary religion as an excellent thing, and it is not to bee taxed as having a bare shew of wisdom.

Answer unto it.

It is true indeed the religion of true beleeuers is voluntary, but how? not in respect of the things done by them because they doe things onely taken up, and willed by themselves, to which they are not bound by Gods Law: No, no, they keepe themselves close to the commandements of God, and their religion and service of God is voluntary in regard of the manner of serving God, because they yeeld obedience, worship and service to God willingly, and cheerefully; they doe such good duties as God hath commanded them in his worship, and they doe them (though in weakenesse) yet with a free and a willing heart and mind, as David bids Salomon, 1 Chron. chap. 28. vers. 9. *Thou Salomon my sonne, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and a willing mind*: thus is their religion voluntary, and no other-

And humbleness of mind] In that the Apostle saith further, that this be w

of wisdom consisted in humbleness of mind, it may seeme strange, for humbleness of minde, is a speciall part of true, and not seeming wisdom: it is pleasing to God, who resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble, as we have it, 1 Pet. 5. 5. but we must take the Apostles meaning: he understanding by [humbleness of minde] in this place, submission and subjection of mind, to the decrees of men, that have no warrant in the word of God; such submission and subjection, hath onely an appearance of wisdom, and it is no true wisdom.

Observe wee from whence (I will passe by things formerly spoken on these words, verf. 18.) observe I say, that the false teachers in the Apostles time, held it an high poynt of wisdom for men to submit their minds, to their devised decrees, and not to lift up the least thought, or the least conceit of minde against them: and so the doctrine hence is this.

It is one note of false teachers to urge subjection, and yeelding obedience to things devised by themselves as a matter of wisdom, that men may doe very well and wisely, if they submit their mindes with reverence to things taught by them, though they be not able to warrant them from the word of God. And thus much is implied in that expostulation of the Scribes and Pharisees with Christ himselfe. Mat. 23. 2. *Why doe thy Disciples transgresse the traditions of the Elders, for they wash not their hands when they eat bread?* As if they had said, what reason have thy Disciples so to doe? is it not foolishly done of them? were it not rather wisdom in them to observe the traditions of our Elders, men that were renowned, and in high esteeme for their gravity and wisdom? that seemes to be the drift of their speech, thus reasoning the matter: *Why doe thy Disciples, &c.*

Now this note cleaves fast to the teachers of the Romish Church, they cannot possibly shift it from them: for what is more common and frequent in their mouthes than the authority of the Church: that men are besotted and possessed with foolish and hereticall pride, in that they refuse to submit to the decrees of holy Churches, without reasoning against them; yea, in that they yeeld not like reverence to the decrees of their Prelates, that they doe to the word of God, for so hath that cursed Councell of Trent set downe with (*anathema*) upon it: this plainly discovers them to bee led with a spirit of error, and of Antichrist.

Why but say they, will you have the sheepe to bee iudges of their Pastor, and the people of their teachers? that were the most foolish disorder in the world.

Answer them, hearers ought to examine by the Scriptures, as the men of Berea did, Act. 17. 11. Whether their teachers doctrine be true, and to reject whatsoever they finde not proved by the Scriptures, and yet are not the sheepe thereby made Iudges of their Pastors, nor people of their teachers: but the word of God is made iudge of every doctrine whether it bee true or false. Men indeed must with all reverence, and humbleness of minde heare their teachers, yea obey them, and be ordered by them, when they find their doctrine to be the doctrine of the holy Ghost, and not the invention or tradition of men. Luk. 10. 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me.*

And herein are many amongst us much wanting, and come farre short of their duty: they will not in some things humble and submit their mindes to the plaine evidence of the Word; though they cannot deny but the doctrine taught is agreeable to the truth, yet they harden their hearts against it, and they will not in humility yeeld obedience unto it: though they must needs confesse the things reprov'd to be a sinner, yet they will not subiect themselves to the reproofe, and suffer themselves to bee wrought upon and formed: witnesse our continued profanation of the Sabbath, in following after

Doct. 3.

It is one note of false teachers that they urge obedience and subjection to things of their owne devising as a matter of wisdom.

Vse 1.

Popish teachers discovered to be led with a spirit of error

Obiect.

Ans.

Vse 2.

Reproofe of such as refuse to submit their mindes and consciences to the plaine evidence of Gods word.

after our sports and pleasures, and wanton dancing on that day, our continuall belching out blasphemous oathes, our drunkenesse, pride, and the like; yea, our wilfull running farre and neare after a cunning man, or cunning woman, (as they are called) but indeed such as deale with sorcery and witchcraft: our seeking to them in time of sicknesse, or weakenesse of body, though this sinne have beene often laid before us. And surely herein I am perswaded, that some persons goe not onely against the plaine evidence of the word, but against their owne consciences, and (as it were) lay violent hands on their consciences: they will not suffer them to cry out against them as they would, and that is a fearefull thing. Wee know it is a grievous thing for one to lay violent hands on his owne body, it makes us tremble to thinke of it: Oh how much more grievous is it, (as it were) to strangle their owne conscience, and for a time to stop the mouth and breath of char, for a little ease or health of the body? Well, let such as still wilfully runne into this sinne, and into other sinnes, though they have often heard to the contrary, let them but remember thus much, that the time shall come (unlesse they repent) when even the blind and ignorant Papists, such as are led hood-winck in their superstition, shall bee justified rather than they, though they have a great measure of knowledge. For these ignorant Papists (I warrant you) with great reverence and devotion, yeeld obedience to the devised decrees and doctrines of their teachers: and yet these persons will not bee brought to submit themselves to the truth, and to humble their mindes and consciences to the plaine evidence of the eternall truth of God; therefore certainly one day this sinne shall lie heavy on their consciences; and those blinde Papists shall rise up in judgement against them, and condemne them:

Come we to the third thing, wherein this shew of wisdom consisted, namely, [*not in sparing the body*] in hard usage of the body. Where first observe (for the grounding of the doctrine) that in the observation of those decrees of not touching, &c. there was hard usage of the body: the Apostle doth grant they seemed to bee wise, for that in the practice of them there was hard usage of the body.

Hence then in the first place wee may easily gather thus much. That superstitious persons in their kind, are not formall and superficiall, but they are laborious and painefull in their superstitious worship and service of God, they doe therein sometimes goe so far, as that they deale hardly with their owne bodies. The Prophet saith of the wicked in his time, Ier. 9. 5. They tooke great paines to doe wickedly; so indeed doe superstitious persons many times to serve God superstitiously. Thus wee read of *Baal's Priests*, 1 King. 18. 28. that they cut themselves with knives and lancets, till the bloud gushed out upon them. Mica. 6. 7. The hypocrite is brought in demanding, *Wherewithall shall I come before the Lord, &c.* I would take any paines, yea doe any thing, even that which is against nature: I would lay hands on mine owne child, and offer my first borne child to serve the Lord: and is it not thus among the Papists? doe not many of them undergoe much hardnesse, and endure great paines in their superstitions? as in wearing hair-cloth, going wool-ward, bare footed, whipping themselves, and the like. Wee read of some monkes called Flagellants, who went bare foot in linnen shirts, leaving an hole behind on their backes, where they did dally whip themselves before the people till the bloud followed: and many hard usages of the body we may reade of, and happily some of us may remember we have seene practised by superstitious persons.

Now then for the use of this point, let us consider and thinke of these paines taken by men in by-paths, and superstitions, even to stir up our selves to greater diligence and paines in the true worship of God. For why? shall superstitious persons be so painefull in their superstitions, and shall we take no paines in the true

Doctr. 4.
Superstitious
persons are not
formall but in
their kind they
are laborious
and painfull.

Use 2.
The paines
taken by men
in their super-
stitions ought

true worship and service of God? For example, shall a superstitious Papist rise early, and breake his sleepe to performe his blinde devotion to goe to his Masse, and wilt thou on the Lords Sabbath lie loytering and bathing thy selfe in thy bed? it is the fashion of the most, on other daies to rise early, but on the Lords day to take their ease, and to rise onely to tricke and trimme up their bodie, but not to breake one minute of an houres sleepe to trimme and prepare their soules to meete the Lord in the publique assembly. Well, let us take knowledge of this to be a fault: Exod. 32. verf. 6. it is said when *Aaron* had yeelded to the people for the making of the golden Calfe, the people did rise early in the morning to offer burnt offerings and peace offerings; let then the diligence and paines of superstitious persons shame us, and stirre us up to greater diligence in the true worship of God; if it doe not, certainly it shall one day judge and condemne us: and withall, remember that it is a gracious thing to employ our bodies in all the parts and members of them diligently and painefully in Gods worship and service, to breake our sleepe, and with our eyes to prevent the morning light, as *David* saith, Psal. 119. 147, 148. with our feete to trudge and runne after the preaching of the Word, with our eares to attend to it, striving against dulnesse and drowynesse: no doubt paines taken in this kinde, will be a comfort unto us when we come to want the use of our members, when our eyes waxe dimme, our eares heaue of hearing, and the strength of our whole bodies, through age or sicknesse, is much decayed: yea without question it will be a comfort unto us, and cheare up our hearts, if wee can remember they have bene heretofore painfully used in the true worship and service of God.

Againe, let us a little further consider the paines of superstitious persons on this manner: shall superstitious persons not spare their owne bodies, but deale hardly with them, thereby serving God (as they doe imagine) and shall wee spare things that are without our bodies, I meane our wealth, and the outward good things of this life, and not employ them to the honour and glory of God, and wherein wee may be sure to doe good service to God, bestowing them liberally on the members of Christ to good uses? let that be farre from us, how shall wee be able to stand before the Judge of all the world, when hee shall say to us, The Idolaters in their superstitions spared not their owne bodies, and yet you in the way of truth, have spared to honour mee, with your goods? or how may wee thinke wee may be able to glorifie God by shedding of our blood (if the Lord should call us unto it) if wee now be hardly drawne to doe him service with our outward goods? It may be wee are painfull in prayer, in hearing the Word, and in other speciall exercises, (and yet the number of them is but few, who are painfull in these things) but when it comes to this, that wee are to doe such duties as cannot be done without cost, and without charge and trouble, Oh, how many of us shrinke and draw backe, and strive to put others before them! farre unlike to good King *David*, who said, 2 Sam. 24. 24. *I will not offer a burnt offering unto the Lord my God, of that which doth cost me nothing:* as if hee had said, If I serve God without cost and charge, how shall it appeare that I doe it in love, in obedience, and in conscience towards God?

Thus ought every Christian to say with himselfe, If I serve God in prayer, and in spirituall exercises, and not in duties of love and mercy, even to my cost and charge, how shall I manifest the sincerity of my faith, and of my love towards God? I will therefore serve God, not onely in spirituall duties, but in such manner as shall be costly and chargeable to me: and howsoever the Papists doe this, thinking thereby to merite, yet let us doe it respecting onely Gods glory: for that indeed ought to be more precious and deare to us than any merit, and if it be not, our hearts are not right within us.

to stirre us up to greater diligence and paines in the true worship of God.

Use 2.

Superstitious persons dealing hardly with their own bodies to serve the Lord (as they doe imagine) ought to shame us if we employ not our wealth and the things without our bodies to the honour and glory of God.

Doff. 5.
Rigorous and
hard dealing
with the body
is but a vaine
shew of wis-
dome.

Vse 1.
The Papists
vainly boast
of their holi-
nesse stand-
ing in hard
dealing with
their bodies.

Vse 2.
We are not so
to beat downe
our bodies as
that we enfee-
ble them and
destroy nature,
and make
them unfit for
good duties.

Observe wee further from these words, (*not sparing the body*) in that the Apostle saith, that in hard usage of the body, consisted a shew of wisdom, wee may easily gather that rigorous, inhumane, and hard dealing with the body, and vexing the body, is but a colour of wisdom. It is no part of true wisdom derived from the wisdom of God, revealed in his Word: wee finde it as an approved rule of nature, and brought in by the Apostle himselfe to perswade men to love their wives, Ephes. 5. 29. he brings it as a constant rule never failing. No man (saith hee) ever yet hated his owne flesh: no man well in his wits, not madde or drunke, foolish or desperate, hated his owne body, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even nature it selfe teacheth thus much: let then our adversaries, the Papists boast and bragge of their outside of holinesse, standing in not sparing the body, in strict fasts, canonicall houres, hard fare, bad lodging, course apparrell, &c. as glorious and excellent things, whereby indeed they insnare many a simple soule: but let us know that these things are but outward shewes and semblances, there is no true wisdom in them: indeed wee are not to pamper our bodies, it will soone bring the spirit under the flesh, which is a miserable thralldome, but wee must labour to keepe under other corruption of our bodies and soules, that is the beating of our bodies, the Apostle speakes of, 1 Corinth. 7. 29. and yet are wee not so to beat downe our bodies, withholding from them meat and drinke and other things needfull, as that wee enfeeble them, or destroy nature, and make them unfit for any good dutie, thats a grievous sinne to deale so hardly with the body, and that for many reasons: our bodies are the worke of Gods hand, as well as the soules, they are made to be instruments of our soules for many good uses: even to the promoting of Gods kingdome, by speech, by administration and receiving the Sacraments, and helping of our brethren: they are the temples of the holy Ghost, members of Christ, and shall bee glorified together with our soules: and therefore howsoever wee are to keepe under the corruption both of body and soule, yet wee are not by any meanes to destroy nature and the strength of our bodies, but wee are to hold an even course betweene the excesse and defect: and in one word, our rule in this case is this, our bodies are so to be used, in respect of meat and drinke, sleepe, recreation, &c. that they may be fit instruments of our soules, for the exercise of every good duty, in the way of repentance, in Gods worship, and towards our brethren: and to this end wee may lawfully use meanes of comfort, refreshing, and of preservation of the strength and abilities of our bodies, as the Apostle bids Timothy, 1 Tim. 5. 23. Drinke no longer water; but use a little wine for thy stomackes sake, and thine owne infirmities.

Come wee now to the last word of this verse, wherein the Apostle doth directly answer to the objection, and removes it by strength of reason. These words are diversly read, some read thus (*neither have they it in any estimation to satisfie the flesh*) with relation to the body: but the originall runnes thus word for word, (*are not in any honour to the filling of the flesh*) and so (as I take it) they may better be thus read, (*but are of no value, save to the filling of the flesh, with respect to the decrees of not touching, nor tasting, nor handling*) and that they are of no honour, no estimation or value: the reason is from the use of them, they serve but to fill the flesh: by (*flesh*) wee are here to understand the lust and desire of corrupt nature, they are of no value, save for the filling of the lust of corrupt nature.

Where observe wee that the Apostle having said, that in the practice of those decrees, of not touching, not tasting, and not handling, there was hard usage of the body, yet here hee reasons against them as tending to the filling of the lust of the flesh: the point hence offered is this.

Doff. 6.

Men may empy the flesh, and deny the body things that others grant to it, and

and yet be fleshly: men may deale hardly with the flesh, and yet therein be carnall: and the reason is plaine, from the words of the Apostle: they may in not sparing the body, satisfy the lust and desire of their owne carnall hearts: yea, the conclusion is generall, men may seeme in their doctrine and practise to be spirituall, and yet therein be fleshly and carnall, 1 Ioh. 4. 1. *Sancti Iohannis*, Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God: hee calls the doctrine of false teachers (*spirits*) seeming indeed to be spirituall, and yet hee saith verse 5. *they are of the world*, and this indeed is the mystery of Antichristianisme. Thus it is in the whole body of Popery, that religion seemes to be most spirituall, yet if wee looke into it and have our eyes opened to discern aright, wee shall see it most fleshly and carnall, it turnes spirituall service into corporall, standing in massing, pompe and musike to delight the outward senses, it saith, sinners must have Gods pardon, or else they cannot be saved, but withall it teacheth they may have it by the power of the keyes for money, and that they may love by the merits of other men, and though in death men faile of repentance, yet for money they may be eased in Purgatory, with a thousand like things, most pleasing to nature. No marvell then though men of their owne accord be so strongly affected to Popery, and once being taken in that snare, are so hardly drawne out of it, wee are not to marvell at it, and for our selves in that it is so, that wherin men seeme to be spirituall, they may not withstanding be carnall.

We are to looke to our selves, and to our hearts in the practise of holy duties: for as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 13. 3. A man may give all his goods to the poore, yea, give his body to be burned, and yet want love: so wee may doe holy and good duties, and yet in the doing them want love, to Gods glory, and feare of his name, and doe them to satisfy the lust of our owne carnall hearts, for pride, vaine glory or some other sinister and by-respect: we are therefore to examine our hearts in the doing of good duties.

One thing more observe wee, the Apostle wee see reasons against the decrees of men tending to the satisfying of the flesh, it is then a fault to satisfy the lust and corruption of the flesh, the Apostle makes it an opposite member to the putting on of Christ, Rom. 13. 14. Put yee on the Lord Jesus Christ, and take no thought for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof: and is this a fault? then doubtlesse farre greater is the sinne of such as use meanes to stirre up the lust and corruption of their owne flesh, as drunkards use to eat salt meats, to take Tobacco, and use other meanes to whet and sharpen their thirst: unlesse persons seeke after such meats as may enflame their lust, and make ready their hearts like an Oven, as the Prophet speaks, Hos. 7. 6. without question that is a most horrible sinne: let such persons as deale thus, know that in so doing they even tempt the Divell himselfe, they dispose their hearts to sinne, and discover the corruption of them in the sight of the Divell, and so even tempt him to tempt them, and allure him as the thiefe is allured by the booty to set upon men, which is a fearefull thing, and such as must needs provoke the Lord to wrath in fearefull manner, and bring downe his heavey judgements on them that use it: let such as are guilty of this sinne thinke on it, and learne to reforme themselves.

Men may deale hardly with the flesh, and yet therein be carnall, and they may seeme in their doctrine and practise to be spirituall, & yet therein be carnall.

Use 1.

Popish religion seeming most spirituall discovered to be most fleshly and carnall.

Note.

Use 2.

Wee must take heed we be not carnall in our practise of spirituall du-

Doct. 7.

It is a fault to satisfy the lust and corruption of the flesh.

Use.

There is exceeding great who use meanes to stirre up the lust & corruption of their owne flesh.

Note.

The general corruption of the flesh.

THE THIRD CHAPTER

CHAP. III. Vers. I.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seeke those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.



¶ The Apostle having now absolved, and finished the first material part of his Epistle, and shewed in the first Chapter that the Doctrine delivered to the Colossians was the truth and confirmed it, and perswaded to continuance in it: and having in the second Chapter confuted contrary errors, and corruptions of false teachers, who sought to thrust on the Colossians other things besides Christ, or with Christ, as meanes of salvation, partly out of Philosophy, and partly out of the Ceremoniall law: the Apostle, I say, having thus

laid downe the truth of Christian doctrine and confuted contrary errors, and so ended his first part of this Epistle.

In this Chapter he comes to the second part of it, namely, to entreat of Christian life and conversation, shewing how Christians ought to walke and behave themselves both in respect of God, and men, both in their generall and speciall callings, whereunto he exhorteth in these two Chapters following.

This third Chapter consisteth of these two parts.

The first, is an exhortation to all Christians, generally as they are Christians and professors of the Gospell, from the first verse to the eighteenth.

The second part is a comprehension of certaine speciall duties of Christians, as they have relation one to another in some particular state and condition of life, as of the duty of wives toward their husbands, children towards their parents, servants towards their Masters; the Apostle exhorting thereunto from the 18. verse of this Chapter, to the second verse of the fourth Chapter.

Now the generall exhortation may be againe subdivided: it containes in it an exhortation to seeke, and to affect heavenly things, from the first verse to the fifth, and then an exhortation to Christian duties of the morall Law, to duties required of Christians in the Commandements of God, and first to the duties of the second Table, from the 5. verse to the 16. and then to duties of the first Table in the 16. and 17. verses.

Now then the four first verses of this Chapter containe an exhortation to seeke, and to affect things above, and not things on the earth, and that exhortation is propounded and urged in the first and second verses, and then in the third and fourth verses is that removed which might discourage from that seeking and affecting of things above.

The second part of the Epistle.

This Chapter consisteth of two parts. The first, a generall exhortation. The second, a comprehension of certaine speciall Christian duties. The generall exhortation subdivided.

In this firſt verſe, more ſpecially wee have the Apoſtles exhortation to ſeeke things that are above, which is implied by the place where they are (namely) where Chriſt is in heaven, together with the glorious ſtate of Chriſt there, that hee ſits at the right hand of God. Seeke thoſe things that are above (where Chriſt ſits, &c.) And this exhortation is urged by an argument taken from the efficient cauſe of that ſeeking (namely) fellowſhip with Chriſt in his reſurrection, and it may be thus framed: *If you be riſen with Chriſt, then ſeeke thoſe things which are above:* but yee are riſen with Chriſt, that is grounded on the twelfth and thirteenth verſes of the Chapter before, where the Apoſtle ſaith, *As many as believed, were buried with Chriſt, and raiſed up with him:* and ſo he brings in this argument as a conſequent on that, if then, or, if therefore yee be riſen with Chriſt, ſeeke thoſe things which are above. So then the ſumme and ſubſtance of this verſe is this, an exhortation to the Coloſſians to ſeeke things above, where Chriſt is in glory at the right hand of God, urged from their fellowſhip with Chriſt in his reſurrection.

Come wee to the words of it as they are laid downe by the Apoſtle, and firſt of theſe words: (*If yee then be riſen with Chriſt, ſeeke thoſe things which are above.*) If then, or if therefore (ſaith the Apoſtle) with relation to that which went before, Chap. 2. 12, 13. (*be riſen with Chriſt*) to be riſen with Chriſt, is to have fellowſhip with Chriſt in his reſurrection, being one with him by the bond of his ſpirit, and by faith to be partakers both of the benefit of his reſurrection, (namely) of all abſolution from ſinne and juſtification, and of the vertue and power of his reſurrection to our vivification, to a raiſing of us up, and quickening of us to newneſſe of life in this life, and to the raiſing up of our bodies to life everlaſting, at the day of judgement. (*Seeke*) this word (*ſeeke*) is Metaphorically borrowed and taken from thoſe that ſeeke, and ſearch for ſome things which they would gladly finde: and the meaning of the Apoſtle is, beſtow all kinde of endeavour, and labour, uſe all good meanes to attaine all thoſe things which are above: by *things above*, the Apoſtle meanes things in heaven, and yet not things in heaven ſecret and hid from us, which wee are not able to conceive and comprehend, (for there be things in heaven which eye hath not ſeene, eare hath not heard, and which the heart of man is not able to conceive) but things revealed to the eye of faith in the Scripture, that is, the joyes and glory made knowne to be in heaven, and eſpecially the heavenly and eternall life, with all thing belonging to it, as (namely) perfect knowledge of God and of Chriſt, perfect love of God, and our brethren, and conſequently, perfect concord, peace, and tranquillity of minde, charity, chaſtity, truth, and ſincerity, and a perfect transforming of our mindes and wills to the will of God: for theſe, and ſuch like, are the things above in heaven, and theſe the Apoſtle would have the Coloſſians to ſeeke after, (for his drift was to perſwade to holinneſſe of life.) Thus then briefly conceive we theſe words, as if the Apoſtle had ſaid, If yee then be one with Chriſt by faith and by the bond of his ſpirit, and have fellowſhip with him in the benefit and power of his reſurrection, beſtow all endeavour and labour, uſe all good meanes to obtaine the joyes and glory, and that bleſſed life, that made knowne to be in heaven, with all things belonging to it.

Here, firſt obſerve we briefly, before wee come to the handling of the words of this verſe, the Apoſtles method, in his order of proceeding in this Epistle, he firſt delivers truth of doctrine, and confutes contrary errors, and then comes to exhortation, and to perſwade to good life, and converſation.

Hence wee plainly ſee, it is not enough, to teach the truth and to confute errors, but to that muſt be added exhortation to godly life: and this wee ſhall finde, to be an ordinary, and conſtant courſe, held by our Apoſtle, in all his Epistles, to inſtance, in one, in ſtead of the reſt, in his Epistle to the Romanes,

Interpre-
tation

Doct. 1.
Unto teaching
of the truth,
and confuting
of errors, muſt

be added exhortation to godly life.

Reason.

Use 1.
The duty of teachers.

Use 2.
Where doctrine and exhortation are joyned together, it is the duty of good hearers to make use of both.

Doct. 1.
A true feeling of our selves to have part in Christ his benefits and merits is a most powerfull argument to stir us up to an holy and heavenly life.

having laid downe the Doctrine of free justification, and of sanctification, the use of the Law, deliverance from the rigour of it by Christ, the calling of the Gentiles, and rejection of the Jewes: Chap. 12. 1. he comes to exhort to good life, and saith, *I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God, &c.* The reason of this order is given by the Apostle, Tit. 2. 11. 12. It is not enough for men to know the Doctrine of the Gospell, and the grace of God that shines to them by the Gospell, but they must also by the same be taught to *deny ungodliness, and worldly lust*: therefore to the teaching of the truth must be subjoynd exhortation to good life.

This then in the first place concernes the teachers of the Word, they must not onely teach the truth, and confute errors; but they must also joyne to their teaching exhortation to good life.

Againe, must teaching and exhortation be conjoynd, must these two goe together? then where this order is observed, where, unto doctrine is added exhortation: it is not enough for us to have knowledge of the truth, and to have errors rooted out of our minds, (that is but to answer one part of our teaching) wee must be further answerable to our teaching, and according to the same be carefull to leade a godly, righteous, and sober life. Let us not deceive our selves, if we say we are of a sound Religion, we hate the Pope, and all superstitions and false doctrine, and yet walke in our old wicked waies and workes of darknesse, surely our state is no better (nay it is farre worse) than the state of the poore blinde Papists, and other heretiques. Remember what our Saviour saith, Luk. chap. 12. vers. 47. *That servant that knoweth his Masters will, and prepareth not himselfe, neither doth according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes: and the 48. verse, To whom much is given, of him shall much be required.* If the Lord trust us with much knowledge, certainly hee will looke for much obedience at our hands.

Now to the doctrine offered from the words of this verse. Wee are first to consider the Apostles argument. Hee labours to perswade the Colossians to seeke things above, and that they endeavour by all good meanes to attaine things in heaven, and especially, an holy, and heavenly life, a life in some measure like to that of Angells and Saints in heaven, by an argument taken from their fellowship with Christ in his resurrection: that being one with him by faith, and so partakers of the benefit of his resurrection to their justification, they should seeke after an heavenly life.

Hence we are given to understand thus much, that our union with Christ by faith, and the finding of our selves thereby made partakers of the merits and benefits of his death, of his resurrection, and of other his workes of mediation, is as strong an argument and motive, as any possibly can be to stirre us up to endeavour to become holy, and leade an holy and heavenly life. Nothing is more powerfull and more prevailing to move men to leade a life in some degree like to the life of Angells and Saints in heaven, than to seele themselves to have part in the merits of Christ his death and resurrection, and other his workes of mediation. For why? we being one with Christ by faith, and thereby finding the comforts that are in Christ, to belong to us, and that we through him are within compasse of Gods speciall love: it cannot but move us to love him againe, as S. Iohn saith, 1 Joh. 4. 19, *Wee love him, because he loved us first.* Gods love first felt warme and comfortable in our hearts, will undoubtedly kindle in them an ardent love of God againe. Can wee finde our selves within compasse of Gods speciall love and favour: be assured of his comfortable presence and protection: of our portion in his promise of life, and salvation: of right and title to all the comforts and blessings belonging to the Saints of God in this life, and for ever, and not to be moved to love God againe, and to study to shew our selves thankfull to him in all holy obedience? it is not possible.

The

The Apostle therefore had great reason to use this argument [*If ye be risen with Christ take those things which are above*]. And upon this ground, let us take knowledge of this, that it is but a sophisme, and a deceit thrust upon some men by strong delusion of the Divell, to say (as the Papists use to say) that the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, that the doctrine we teach (that we being one with Christ by faith, are partakers of his life, death and resurrection, and all his workes of mediation to our justification) is a doctrine of liberty, and that it makes men licentious, lets open a gap to all loosenesse of life; that cannot be, that doctrine is indeed the originall and ground of all sincere and holy obedience; and if we thinke, that we by faith apprehend the merit of Christ his death and resurrection, for the remission of our finnes, and justification, and yet be wanting in duty and thankfulness to God, and live a prophane, a licentious and loose life, wee deceive our selves, yea, wee are yet in our finnes, if our hearts be possessed with such deceiving thoughts. Never was any heart by faith made one with Christ, and bathed in his blood, but was thereby made soft, plyable, and obedient to God, and tender, loving, and feelingly affected towards men; yea certainly a lively feeling in our hearts of the comforts in Christ, and of Gods mercy, in, and through him, will set our heads a worke to devise (if it were possible) some retribution, and cause us to say with David, Psal. 116. 12. *What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits toward me?*

In the next place wee are to marke the phrase and forme of speech here used by the Apostle: he saith not, *If ye believe that Christ is risen*: but [*if ye be risen with Christ*]. I have already shewed (from this manner of speaking in the chapter before, vers. 12.) the neere union that is betweene Christ and his true members, and that when he died, and rose againe, they died, and rose with him, together with the use, that nothing can disappoint them of the benefit of Christ his death, and resurrection: I will not now againe stand on those things: but from hence we are further taught thus much. That we must not onely believe that Christ rose from the dead for us, for our justification; but wee must finde our selves risen with him: that is, wee must finde our selves partakers of the power of his resurrection to raise us from the death of sinne to newnesse of life. This is one principall effect of the vertue of Christ his resurrection, spoken of by the Apostle, Phil. 3. 10. and the vertue of Christ his resurrection is the power of his God-head, or of his Spirit, whereby he mightily raised himselfe from death to life: and one notable effect of that power is the raising of his members, from the death of sinne, to newnesse of life; and this power we must finde effectually in our selves, as the Apostle hath taught it plainly, Rom. 6. 4. and in divers other places: no doubt we have the point in speculation, wee have often heard of it.

I will therefore endeavour to stirre us up to the practice of it: and to this purpose consider wee but this one thing. Christ his resurrection is a ground of excellent comfort, and without that, all our comfort in Christ is nothing. The Apostle hath said it, 1 Cor. 15. 17. *If Christ be not risen, our faith is in vaine, and wee are yet in our finnes.* Now then consider it; howsoever it is most true that Christ is risen, and his resurrection is a singular comfort to all his true members, yet to us it is no comfort if we be not risen with him. If wee be not raised from the death of sinne, to the life of righteousness by the power of his resurrection; he is not risen to us as a Saviour and a Conqueror over sin, hell, death, and damnation; but as a Iudge to condemne us. And this wee may easily gather out of Revel. 20. 6. *Blessed is he that hath his portion in the first resurrection: that is, in rising from sinne to newnesse of life [for over him the second death hath no power.]* Hereupon it followes strongly on the contrary: hee that hath not part in the first resurrection, hee that is not raised from the death of sin, to the life of righteousness, hee shall certainly feeble and endure the paines of the second death,

Vse.

The doctrine of free justification by faith in Christ, is unjustly charged to set open a gap to loosenesse of life.

Doct. 2.

We must first finde in our selves the power of Christ his resurrection, raising us from the death of sin to newnesse of life.

Vse.

A strong motive to stir us up to this duty is this, that Christ his resurrection is no comfort to us if we be not risen with him.

over him it shall have power. Let us not therefore content ourselves to say, we believe (as it is in the Creed) that Christ rose againe from the dead: that is no better than the implicite and infolded faith of the Papists, who say they believe as the Church believes, not knowing what the Church believes: such a faith will not comfort us in the time of tentation. Let us never rest till we finde our selves risen with Christ, till we feele the power of his resurrection, raising us up from the death of sinne to newnesse of life; and that indeede will comfort us, when we stand in neede of comfort, and give us assurance that the comfort and benefit of Christ his resurrection belongs to us: yea, that will give us assurance that the Lords mercy will never faile us, he having wrought in us by his Spirit, and made us of vile wretches, vessells of grace and holinesse; of mansions of the Divell, temples of the holy Ghost, certainly his grace, mercy, and goodnesse shall never faile, nor forsake us; yea, this is it that will assure us that our faith shall never faile.

It followeth, [*Seeke those things which are above*] that is, endeavour, labour, and use all good meanes to attaine them.

Doct. 4.
We must give
all diligence
that we may
attaine an hea-
venly life.

Hence we are plainly taught, that wee must give all diligence that wee may attaine an heavenly life, that wee may truly know God, and Christ, and our selves, and may truly love God, and our brethren, and conforme our minds and wills to the holy will of God; we must seeke for it, as for the things we would gladly finde: thus hath our Saviour commanded, *Matth. chap. 6. vers. 33. Seeke ye first the Kingdome of God, &c.* and *Matth. chap. 13. vers. 45.* hee compares the Kingdome of Heaven to a Merchant that seekes good pearles; thereby teaching us to use earnest endeavour to attaine, not onely to the reward of glory in heaven, but an heavenly conformity with the blessed Angels and Saints in this life. And the reason is manifest: the attainment of this is very hard, there be many things to hinder it; as the power of our enemies, the Divell and his angells, the lust and corruption of our owne hearts, the evill examples that be in the world, and manifold troubles and trialls that stand up and oppose against it; therefore we must use most earnest endeavour, and breake through all difficulties to attaine it.

Reason.

Quest.
Ans.

If you aske what are the meanes to come unto it?

I answer briefly, diligent hearing, reading, meditating and conferring on the Word and works of God, and chiefly of that infinite glory our Saviour doth now enjoy at the right hand of his Father, and hath prepared for us; and adding to these, earnest prayer and suit to God, whereof our Saviour saith, *Matth. 7. 7. Aske and it shall be given you, seeke and ye shall finde, &c.* By these meanes wee are to seeke for an heavenly life, and that earnestly and constantly, as those that would gladly finde it.

Vse.
Reprooffe of
carelesse and
carnall people,
who never care
to seeke after
heavenly
things, or seeke
them diligenc-
ly.

A motive to
stirre us up to
a diligent see-
king after hea-
venly things.

This then meets with those carelesse and carnall people, who foolishly say, they will leave all to God, and thinke they may finde that which they never sought, and seeke as though they cared not whether they found or no: yea, they sticke not to say, that heavenly things may be sought, but other things must be sought after; turning that saying of Christ (*First seeke the Kingdome of God, and his righteousness, and then all things shall be ministred unto you*) cleane contrary; first seeke other things, and then the Kingdome of God.

Now then (to stirre us up to greater diligence in seeking after an heavenly conformity with the blessed Angells and Saints) consider onely thus much: we know not how soone the Lord may bring us to a triall, whether wee have earnestly sought after it or no; and as then such as have sought heavenly things diligently, shall finde and feele unspeakable comfort, which they would not misse for all the world, they shall finde boldnesse to speake to God by prayer, and assurance to be heard: so on the other side, such as have had no care to seeke after heavenly things (shall finde themselves in time of triall)

in

in a miserable case, feeling no comfort, nor daring to speake to God with any hope to be heard: the Lord himselfe hath said, Prov. 1. 28. that then they shall call upon him, but he will not answer, they shall seeke him carely, but they shall not finde him; and that is an heavey thing: when the afflicted are forsaken of men, yet this refuge they have, that they may pray to God; but if they finde no comfort nor helpe from him, their state then is most wretched. Let us thinke on it, and let it stirre us up (now while we have time, and before the evill day come upon us) earnestly to seeke after heavenly things.

One thing more we are to observe from these words, namely, the object of our seeking, expressed by the Apostle, to be [*things above in heaven*] in that the Apostle makes the object of our seeking, things above in Heaven.

We are taught thus much, that we are not to content our selves with seeking any thing here on earth, as the object of our endeavour and labour, but we must seeke after things higher, even in heaven. In a word more plainly, (keeping to the purpose of the Apostle, which was to perswade to an heavenly life) wee are here taught, that as many as are made alive with Christ, and quickened by vertue of his resurrection, are not to content themselves with their endeavour and labour, and using all good meanes to reach the holinesse of the best man now living on the face of the earth, or that ever lived in the world, being but a meere man; I say a meere man to except Christ, who was more, even God and man, howsoever wee are to follow the example of such as are good and godly, 1 Cor. 11. 1. *Be yet followers of mee, even as I am of Christ*: yet are we not to rest contented in using meanes to reach the holinesse of any man or woman, the most holy now living, or heretofore living on the face of the earth.

The reason of this is plaine, because no man on earth is a perfect paterne of holinesse, the most holy man that is, or ever was, is partly flesh, and partly spirit; and that which is said of *Elias*, Jam. chap. 5. vers. 17. may be truly said of all Gods children living in this world, they are subject to passions, they have their infirmities; therefore no man (the most holy that is) is a perfect paterne of holinesse, and consequently wee are not to rest contented in using meanes, to attaine the holinesse of the best man living in this world, we are not there to pitch downe our rest, but we are to endeavour by all good meanes, to aspire to that holinesse that is found in heaven: it must be one part of our daily prayer (as we are taught by our Saviour) that we may doe the will of God here in earth, as it is done above in heaven.

Can wee in this life come to that perfection of holinesse that is found in heaven; and doe the will of God here on earth, in that perfection it is done in heaven?

I answer no, we cannot; the words of that petition, *thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven*, doe not signifie equality, but similitude. We are not to dreame of any perfection of holinesse in degree here in this life, it is Anabaptisticall; yet are wee to breathe after it, and to sigh and grone, that we are not able to search it, and by all good meanes to seeke after it.

Let then as many as find themselves risen with Christ, and made alive by the power of his resurrection (to them belongs the use of this point) let them, I say, thinke on this duty; hereby the best of us may find how short we are of that we ought to come to. No doubt, if we compare our selves with other of the Saints and children of God that yet live in this world, we shall find we come farre short of them in many graces, much more are we short of that holinesse that is found in heaven. I speake not this to make sad the hearts of any, that truly endeavour after holinesse in regard of their great weaknesse: no certainly, the least measure of saving grace is pleasing to God in Christ; but I speake to stirre us up yet further, to seeke after grace, and holinesse, and to be displeased with our selves,

Dof. 5.

Such as are made alive with Christ are not to rest contented in using meanes to reach to the holinesse of the best that now live, or heretofore did live on the face of the earth, being but meere men, but they must endeavor after that holinesse that is found in heaven.

Reason.

Object.

Answer

Vse.

The best and the most holy that are, must take notice of their want of holinesse and labour to aspire to a greater measure.

Note.

selves in regard of our wants and our imperfections, let us every one, even those that have the greatest measure of holiness remember, that we must not rest contented to reach the holiness of the best in this life, but we are to labour and endeavour after that holiness that is found in heaven: and let us with our Apostle, Phil. 3. 13. forget that which is behind, and endeavour ourselves unto that which is before; and still presse forward, and follow hard toward the mark. The greater measure of holiness we come to, the greater will be our comfort in this life, and the greater our glory in heaven.

Interpretation.

Two things
are signified
by Christ his
sitting at Gods
right hand.

Come we now to the amplification of this exhortation in the words following [*Where Christ sits at the right hand of God*] In these words the Apostle doth expresse the place where those things above are to be sought for, namely, where Christ is in heaven, and withall hee doth shew the glorious state of Christ in heaven, that there hee sits at the right hand of God. Wee must stand a while to open the meaning of the words [*where Christ sits, &c.*] that is, in heaven where Christ is: for as the Apostle saith, Ephes. chap. 1. verse 20. Hee setteth him at his right hand in the heavenly places. Now in that hee saith, There hee sits at the right hand of God, this forme of speech is metaphoricall, and it is spoken by way of similitude, to bring downe to our reach and understanding the glorious state of Christ in heaven, that there he is advanced to an infinite and unspeakable height of glory. For indeed in proper speech God hath neither right hand nor left, neither can he be said to sit or stand, he is a spirit infinite, incomprehensible, filling heaven and earth. This forme of speech then is not to be taken in the proper signification of the words, but as a borrowed speech; it is taken from the manner of Kings on the earth, who use to set those at their right hand, whom they purpose most of all to honour, 1 King. 2. 19. *Salomon* (in token of honour) caused a seat to be set for his mother, and shee sat at his hand: or it is taken from the manner of some great King, who having one only son, his first begotten, who shall be his heire, and succeed him in his Kingdome: he makes him to sit at his right hand, that he may rule his Kingdome with him, and exercise power and authority over all things belonging to the Kingdome. So then by this forme of speech [*that Christ sits at the hand of God*] two things are signified:

First, that Christ is exalted to unspeakable glory in heaven, 1 Tim. 3. 16. that he there is partaker of the glory of his Father: for the word [*God*] doth here signifie God the Father; and the author to the Hebrewes saith, Heb. 1. 3. that he sitteth at the right hand of his Majesty in the highest places.

Secondly, by this phrase is signified, that Christ is exalted to a full administration of his Kingdome, even to be the head of his Church, and (with his Father) to be Lord and governour of heaven and earth, having all power given to him both in heaven and earth, as himselfe saith, Matth. 28. 18. And this the Apostle shewes plainly, Ephes. 1. where having said, verse 20. that Christ is set at the right hand of his Father; he presently subjoyneth by way of exposition, that he is exalted farre above all principalities, and that all things are made subject unto him, and he made the head of the Church, 1 Pet. 3. 22. the Apostle saith, he is at the right hand of God, gone into Heaven, to whom the Angells and powers, and might are subject.

Quest.

Now here (for the better understanding of this point) a question is to be answered: It may be demanded, whether Christ be advanced to the right hand of his Father, as God, or as both God and man.

Answer.

I answer, in respect of both natures, both as God and as man, even Christ, God and man in one person; as God incarnate, and manifested in the flesh; and as man, received into unity of person with the Son of God. For howsoever Christ (considered as God alone, not manifested in the flesh) was Lord and King from all eternitie; yet as God incarnate he began to reigne after his ascension

tion into heaven; and againe considered as man alone, he is not Lord and King, but as man received into unity of person with the God-head, and subsisting in the second person of the Trinity. Thus then wee are to conceive the words of the Apostle; as if he had said thus: In heaven, where Christ as God incarnate, and as man personally united to his God-head, where Christ, God and man, or man and God, both enjoy fulnesse of glory, and is exalted to be Lord and King of heaven and earth, even to rule and governe with his Father, all things both in heaven and earth.

First, observe we here that the Apostle doth point out the place of Christ his advancement to glory, namely, above in heaven: for in saying (*where Christ sits at the right hand of God*) hee gives us to understand that above in heaven is Christ advanced to glory; and though Christ his Kingdome extend it selfe over all things; yet in heaven alone, doth Christ (as God and also as man) rule in fulnesse of glory and Majesty.

Hence it is that the Apostle doth expressly and distinctly set downe the place of his exaltation to be in the highest heavens, Ephes. 1. 20. that hee sits at Gods right hand in the heavenly places. And againe, Heb. 1. 3. it is said, that he sits at the right hand of Majesty in the highest places. And this meetes with the errour of some, who would gather from Christ his sitting at the right hand of his Father, that he in his man-hood is every where present: whereas indeed, his sitting at the right hand of his Father, rightly understood, is rather a confutation, than any confirmation of that conceit, because his sitting at the right hand of God, is his manifest exaltation, to rule in fulnesse of glory, and that is (according to the Doctrine of the Apostle) in the highest heavens, and not else where.

Gods right hand is every where, Christ sits at the right hand of God, therefore his manhood is every where, this is a meere fallation and deceitfull kinde of reasoning.

But to answer, so as wee may conceive the truth, Christ sits at the right hand of God, that is, both as God and man he rules in glory over all things, in heaven and earth: may wee thereupon conclude, that hee (both as God and man) is in every place present? no such matter, it will not follow from thence, from his ruling in every place, is no good argument to inferre his presence in every place, in respect of his man-hood. We know one may rule in many places where he is not present in body; and Christ his sitting at the right hand of God, doth not take away the essentiall property of his body, which is to be in one place at one time: if it did, then were Christ his humane nature, by his exaltation, not glorified, but abolished and taken away, from these words, *where Christ sits, &c.* expressing Christ his advancement in heaven, two things are further offered to our consideration.

The first is this; Christ our head and Saviour doth enjoy in heaven incomprehensible glory, even in our nature, Christ in his man-hood personally united to his God-head, is partaker of unspeakable glory, not onely infinitely exceeding the glory of all the sonnes of men, whose glory is lesse than a shadow in comparison of it, but also of the most holy and glorious Angels, as the Apostle saith, Phil. 2. 9. *God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name;* and Heb. 1. 13. *saith the holy Ghost, Unto which of the Angels said hee at any time, sit at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy foot-stools;* giving us to understand, that his glory is farre above the glory of the most glorious Angels: yea, such is the visible glory and brightnesse of Christ his man-hood, that it is said to be the light of the heavenly Jerusalem, Revel. 21. 23. and this light and glory cannot be separated from the body of Christ: how then can hee be present in body (as the Papists say) in the Sacrament, and not be seene of any, is it possible? no certainly: it is as much as to give the lie to the holy Ghost, and to say, that Christs body is not glorious in heaven.

The

Doctrine 6.
Though Christ his Kingdome reach to all things, yet doth hee as God and man rule in fulnesse of glory in heaven.

Vse.

Confutation of that conceit, that Christ his sitting at the right hand of his Father, proves his presence every where in his manhood.

Obiect.

Answer.

Ans.

Ans.

Ans.

Ans.

Ans.

Ans.

Ans.

Ans.

Ans.

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Ans.

Use 2.

It is a great comfort to all true believers that Christ is now most glorious in himselfe, for hee will one day be most glorious in his members also.

The use of this point for our selves is full of sweet comfort, to as many as truly believe in Christ (to them belongs the comfort of it, and let not others meddle with it) as many as are true believing members of Christ, may hence gather matter of exceeding great comfort, for why? is it so, that Christ our head is already possessed of unspeakable glory in heaven? then certainly in time he will make us partakers of the same: he now is most glorious in himselfe, he will one day be most glorious in his members: it is one part of his prayer, Joh. 17. 24. *That his members should be with him, and be partakers of his glory.* And the Apostle saith, plainly, Phil. 3. 21. *He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.* How then shall not this fill the hearts of all true believers with abundance of comfort, howsoever in this world wee are despised, made as the refuse, and off-scouring of all things, had in derision, and be scorned and contemned of the world; yet (as the holy Ghost exhorts, Hebr. 12. 2.) *Let us looke up to Iesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the Crosse, and despised the shame; and is now at the right hand of God.* And remember that hee hath prepared like glory for us in heaven, and it will make us endure the Crosse, and despise the shame: yea, let such as now, either lie under some lingering disease, or are pinched in their bodies with hunger, cold, nakednesse, and their bodies are tossed from post to pillar, buffeted, beaten, spit on, and many waies abused; yet they believing in Christ, let them thinke on this to their comfort, that those distressed, or any way abused bodies of theirs, shall one day be clothed with glory, and made like the glorious body of Christ Iesus: yea, remember that this is a thing so cleere, and so certaine, that the Apostle doubts not to affirme, that wee already sit with Christ in heavenly places, Ephes. 2. 6. Let then as many as truly believe in Christ thinke on this, as an infallible truth, to their comfort.

Dott. 8.

Christ our head and Saviour is Lord and King of all things, governing his Church in speciall manner, and exercising his power to the confusion of such as oppose him.

Note.

Use. Comfort to all that truly believe in Christ against the snare of any adversary power whatsoever.

I come to the next thing, the point is this; Christ our head and Saviour, is Lord and King of all things, governing his Church and members in this world in speciall manner, gathering them out of the world, guiding them in the way to heaven, exercising them under afflictions and tentations, to spirituall obedience, supporting them in their troubles, and defending them against the rage of all enemies whatsoever: and againe, exercising his power against all that oppose themselves to his Kingdome, to their utter confusion: that place, Ephes. 1. 22, makes this manifest. The Apostle saith, that Christ sitting at the right hand of God, is made head to his Church, to governe it as a head, and that all other things are under his feet, and especially the enemies of his kingdome, to tread them downe at his pleasure: for howsoever the enemies of his Church are under his feet, to tread them downe when he will, yet hee suffereth them for a time to exercise some power and rage over his Church in this life, because he will have his members made conformable to himselfe, in a measure of suffering; and some among the enemies of his Church belong to the election of grace, and he will not destroy them with the rest: and because the number of the elect is not yet full: but in the end he will bring them to utter destruction. And to strengthen our faith in this; wee see that Christ our Lord and King doth sometimes manifest his power in bringing to nought the plots and devices of the enemies of his Church, and in bringing confusion upon them, as he did on those Gunpowder Traitors, who intended the overthrow of the Gospell, and of his Church in this Land. We are to ascribe our deliverance from that intended mischief not to any worldly means or policy, but only to the all-sufficient defending power of Iesus Christ; to him alone belongeth the praise and glory of that our great deliverance, and to him we must shew our selves thankfull. And let the consideration of Christ his great power comfort and encourage all that believe in him, against the feare of any adversary power whatsoever: let us know (whatsoever the enemies of Christ and his Church, Antichrist, and the rest doe against his members, they shall not

not prevaile to the hurt of their soules. Christ sits in heaven, and over-rules them, limiting their power, and their rage, and in the end he will utterly destroy it: yea, they may as well pull Christ out of his seate in heaven, as one of his members out of his hands: and that is an excellent comfort, for all that truly believe in Christ.

Verf. 2. *Set your affections on things which are above, and not on things which are on the earth.*

IN this verse wee have the other part, or branch of the Apostles exhortation propounded, wherein hee doth exhort the Colossians to minde, and affect things above. *Set your affections on things which are above:* and this is further enlarged by the deboration from the contrary, *that they do not minde nor affect things on earth:* (*And not on things, &c.*)

The word here translated (*Set your affections, &c.*) is a generall word comprehending the affections, and operations both of the understanding and will, we finde it in Scripture, applyed to both, but most commonly to be the occasions of will and affections, which are particular motions of the will, and so it may be well rendered as here it is, (*Set, &c.*) or as wee have it, Rom. 8. 5. (*your*) the meaning of the Apostle is this, (*minde and affect*) and in particular, let your thoughts and meditations, your care, your desire, your love, and longing, be set on things above, (*by things above*) as before was shewed, wee are to understand the joyes and glory of heaven, and especially the heavenly life that is made knowne to be in heaven, and all things belonging to it, as perfect knowledge of God, and of Christ, perfect love of God and of our brethren, and a perfect conformity of minde and will to the will of God, (*and not on things which are on the earth.*) By things on the earth the Apostle meaneth things of this life, things that pertaineth to the maintenance of naturall life in this world, as meate, drinke, apparell, riches, &c. even all things whatsoever they be, serving either for our necessity, or for our delight in this life onely: therefore (1 Cor. chap. 7. vers. 30.) the Apostle shureth them up under one word, even under the name of this world (*this life and this world*) meaning the things of this world, serving for our use onely in this life. Thus then wee are to conceive the Apostles meaning in the words of this verse, as if he had thus spoken:

Minde, and affect, let your meditations, thoughts, and musings, your care, your desire, your love, and longing, be set on the joyes and glory of Heaven, and especially on that heavenly life that is made knowne to be in heaven, and on all things belonging to it, and pull away your minde, and affections, your thoughts, your care, your desire, and your love, from all earthly things whatsoever, serving either for necessity, or for delight in this life onely.

Now here first, wee are to make, that our Apostle was not content to say, (*Seeke things above, &c.*) endeavour and labour by all good meanes to attaine them: but he addes to this, (*Set your affections on things which are above.*)

Hence we are given to understand, that much, that it is not enough for us to seeke the things that are above, the things made knowne to be in heaven, but wee must minde and affect them, our thoughts must runde upon them, and our hearts must be lift up above all earthly things, and set on things found at the right hand of God in heaven, thither must our care, thither must our desire, our love and longing be carried: for why? as our Saviour hath taught us, Mat. chap. 6. vers. 20. *Our treasure must be in heaven,* and there also must our hearts be: yea certainly, as he saith in that place, *If your treasure be in heaven, there will your hearts be also,* our hearts will follow our treasures, 1 Pet. 1. 4. the Apostle saith, (*our inheritance*) even that which all true believers looke to be possessed

Interpretation.

Dott. 1.

We must not only seeke the things that are above in heaven, but wee must also minde and affect them.

Reason.

of (*is in heaven*) therefore it is meete that our mindes should be there.

Now for the reason of this duty, wee neede seeke no further than this very Text, the Apostle saith, wee are to looke after heavenly things, and to give all diligence to finde them; and that wee shall never doe, unlesse wee minde and affect them; we know it in matters and businesses of the world, what thing soever we minde and set our hearts upon, that wee follow earnestly, and with all our strength: so certainly, if our mindes and affections be upon heavenly things, wee shall with earnest endeavour seeke after them: therefore it is needfull that our mindes and affections be set on things above.

Vse.

Most men are defective in this duty, they doe not mind and affect heavenly things.

We see then our duty, let us hereby examine our selves, and if wee duly examine our selves concerning this duty, I feare me the most of us shall finde our selves much wanting, and farre short of that we ought to come unto. Doe our thoughts ever runne on heavenly things? Are our mindes and affections fully set and fixed on them? Surely if we deale truly with our selves, I doubt we shall finde that the thoughts of most of us are otherwise taken up, and that our care, desire, love, and longing, are spent on other things: to passe by such as manifestly discover, that they minde nothing lesse, than things above, a man may iudge of their inwards, by the foame and filch that comes from them, they foame out the folly of their owne hearts, in cursing, swearing, railing, filthy speaking, and the like: to passe by them, I appeale to such as seeme to be better minded, whether their thoughts, their care, their desire, their love, and longing, be not rather spent on the things of this world, than on things above in heaven: certainly if wee be not partiall to our selves, and blinded with our owne carnall selfe-love, wee must needs confesse it to be so, in the most of us, as it was said to Peter, Mark. 14. 70. *Thou art of Galile, for thy speech is like.* So I may iustly say to many of us, thou art of the world, thy speech is like, thou favourst not the things of God, but the things of the world, thy speech bewraileth thee, thou art able to speake much, and to the purpose of the things of this world: but when thou comest to speake of heaven and heavenly things, thy tongue doth faulter, and cleaves to the roose of thy mouth.

Againe, wee know that one that is in a strange Country, and mindes homeward, he will ever be enquiring, and that willingly, after the way that leaeth to his dwelling: now where is almost that man or woman that doth thus willingly enquire after heaven? say surely, the way being pointed out unto us, the most of us have little, or no care to walke in it; and that is a plaine evidence, that our mindes are not thitherward, our hearts and affections are not set on heaven and heavenly things: haply thou hast a good liking, and a little taste of the powers of the world to come, as it is Heb. 6. 5, and therewith thou art content, and dost please thy selfe; deceive not thy selfe, that liking and taste may be in one that shall never be saved: thou must have more than a taste, even a true and sound affection set on things above.

Quest.

Thou wilt say, how shall I know that I have more than a taste of them, that I have a true and sound affection to them?

Answ.

By two things, first, if thou have a care to use all good meanes, for the continuance, and confirmation of that affection in thee.

Secondly, if that minde bring forth a love to God for so great a mercy, in working that affection in thee, and that love be expressed in duties of love, both to God and men, then indeede thine heart is right within thee, and thy affections truly set on things above, and this must be in every one of us: and to stirre us up to this duty, consider we:

First, the comfort that Gods Spirit doth worke in the hearts of true believers in this life, he workes sometimes so great comfort in their heart, as makes them undergoe most exquisite torments, even with singing.

Againe, consider the comfort of a good conscience in this life, though it be mingled

Motives to stir
us up to this
duty.

mingled with some feare: yet as *Salomon* saith, Prov. 15. 15. *It is a continual feast.* Oh then the joy and comfort of the holy Ghost dwelling in us in heaven, and the peace and comfort of a good conscience there, where it shall be free from feare, must needs be infinite and unspeakable: let then the consideration of the beginnings of heavenly comfort (so sweet and excellent, even in this life) raise up our hearts above all earthly things, and stir us up to set our mindes and affections to the things that are at the right hand of God in Heaven.

In the next place, in that the Apostle doth exhort (to set our affections on heavenly things.)

We plainly see, that Religion doth not take away and abolish humane affections (as some have foolishly thought) but doth onely order them, and bring them into subjection to the Will of God. Wee are not taught by Religion to put out affections, but to labour to have them sanctified, and by grace moved to a right object, with due measure and moderation, according to the nature of the object. We are taught in many places of Scripture, to hate evill and to love good, to rejoyce with them that rejoyce, to be sorry with the afflicted, &c.

And there be two reasons why affections are not abolished, but onely ordered.

The first is this, God himselfe planted them in the heart of man in the first creation, they being nothing else but particular motions of his will, and therefore they are not to be taken away by Religion: for Religion is not to extinguish any power or motion of the minde or will, but onely to remove the corruption of it.

Secondly, affections renned containe in them a great part of holinesse and of the Image of God: and being ordered by grace carry us forward to a notable high degree of holinesse.

Hence it is that they are compared to the strings of musically instruments, which being well tuned, and rightly moved, make a sweete harmony: so affections ordered by grace, and moved by the spirit, are the matter of many excellent vertues, and therefore they are not to be rooted out, but we are to labour to have them rightly ordered.

And seeing religion doth not abolish, but order affections, we ought therefore to spy out the motions and inclinations of our hearts, and to labour that they may be sanctified, and moved by grace, as that our anger and hatred may be against sinne, our love may be to goodnesse, &c. And the rather let us strive, that the motions of our hearts and wills may be thus sanctified, because (being in their naturall condition) they carry us with a violent course to the highest pitch of sinne, and hence it is that they are called motions of finnes, Rom. 7. 5. and they are the very fire and fuell of sinne. To insist in one particular, experience may teach, that the desire of mans heart (not sanctified) is commonly so set on the things of this world, as it cannot be satisfied, and if it be suffered to runne at large, it will carry a man headlong to the pit of perdition, 1 Tim. chap. 6. verf. 9, 10. *They that will be rich, &c.* Now desire is not to be rooted out, but to be ordered by grace, and turned another way, and set on heaven and heavenly things: and thus wee are to deale with the motions of our hearts, wee are to labour to have them sanctified, and rightly ordered: and know we that according to our affections, so shall we profit both by the workes and word of God. Many see the wonderfull workes of God, and heare his Word, with others, and yet profit not as others doe, because the Lord hath not given them the like good affections. When therefore thou seest the Iudgements of God on any place or person: or hearest his Word, pray that the Lord would fill thine heart with holy affections, and (the Lord so doing) without question thou shalt profit by the same.

Marke further that our Apostle to his exhortation (set your affections on things

M m 2

which

Religion
doth not
take away
and abolish
humane
affections,
but doth
onely order
them.

Doctrine 1.
Religion doth
not take away
and abolish hu-
mane affecti-
ons, but doth
onely order
them.

Reasons.

I

2

Vse.

Wee must spy
out the moti-
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hearts, and la-
bour to have
them sanctifi-
ed and right-
ly ordered.

Note.

Doctr. 3.

Wee cannot mind & affect things heavenly and things earthly both together.

Use.

They deceive themselves who thinke they may earnestly seeke after earthly things, and yet mind and affect things heavenly.

Note.

A motive to withdraw our hearts from the world and the things of it.

which are above) addes a dehoration from *seeing our afflictions in things which are on the earth.*

Hence it is cleere that we cannot mind and affect things above and the things on the earth both together; it is not possible that our care, desire, love and liking should be set on things above and things on the earth both at one time, Phil. 3. 19. 20. the Apostle makes a flat opposition between minding earthly things, and having our conversation in heaven, as it becommeth true believers. Let no man then deceive himselfe and say, or thinke that hee may mind or affect things above, and earthly things together: it is as possible to looke upward and downward both at once: yea, know we that it is a dangerous thing by hot and earnest pursuit to seeke after earthly things, though it be by good and lawfull meanes: that greedy hunting after them, will make us settle on our dregs, so as in time we shall looke for no other happinesse but in them. Indeed we may use the world, and things of the world; but it must be according to the rule of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 7. 31. *as though we used them not*, and so as they may helpe us forward in our travell towards heaven, and so as our hearts be not ensnared with any thing in the world; yea, wee may use the things of this world, sometimes for delight, yet in our lawfull delight in them, our chiefe ioy must be at the right hand of God in heaven. And now to speake something that may tend to withdraw our hearts from the world and the things of the world, to which they are wedded, and will hardly heare of any divorce, yet to this purpose consider we onely the condition of the things of this life, that they are things transitory, and of small continuance, this being well considered is of weight and able to dissuade any one (that is endued but with common sense) from wedding his minde to them: for who is it, (but he that hath his eyes shut up, and cannot see things that differ) knowing that he hath but a short time to enjoy the things of this life, and the things themselves vanishing and flitting away as a shadow, that will make account of them as his owne, and promise himselfe any long time in them? It was the foolish conceit of the rich man, Luke 12. 19. *Soule thou hast much goods laid up for many yeeres: live at ease, eat, drinke, and take thy pleasure*: hee thought hee had perpetuity in his goods; but what was the answer of God to him? *thou fool, &c.* and indeede what greater folly? what more wilfull madnesse can there be than this? for a man to give his heart over to such things, as are shut up in a vapour, a shadow, a puffe of wind, a bubble, (such is mans life) which when they continue the longest, are but a spanne long, cut off by death, short and momentary: Oh then let not our soules (which we hope shall live with the Lord for ever) be so abased, as to be set on vanishing, and transitory things, but let them be raised up to meditate, minde and affect the things that last for ever, even the things found in Jesus Christ, now sitting at the right hand of his Father in Heaven.

Verf. 3. *For yee are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

The first words of this verse, containe an argument to confirme the Apostles dehoration, in the last words of the second verse, (namely) from minding and affecting things on the earth, and the argument is from the condition of the Colossians believing in Christ (*that they were dead*) and it may be thus framed: dead men have no minde, nor further care for the things of this life, but yee are dead, therefore you ought not to minde them.

Now to this argument, haply the Colossians might take exception, they might reply and say, are we dead? why then wee are not to minde and affect things above, dead men minde nothing, the Apostle therefore prevents this objection, in the next words by further explication of his speech, letting them understand that howsoever they were dead, yet not simply dead, but so as they

they had life, and hee sets downe what manner of life they had (namely, *a life hid* (*ye are dead, and your life is hid* :) yet hereupon peradventure the corrupt nature of man might further inferre, and say, Is our life hid, doth it not appeare? why then should wee seek and affect things that pertaine to that life that appeares not, and omit the things of this life? This also the Apostle doth meete withall, and to this he answers in the words following, setting before them how this life was hid (namely *with Christ*).

Secondly, in whom it was, even in God.

And thirdly, the time when it should be fully revealed, verse the fourth : as if hee had said, howsoever, it is true, that your life is hid, yet no otherwise than Christ is now hid : and it is hid in God, who is a safe keeper of it, and in time it shall certainly be revealed. So then in this third verse wee have a reason yeelded, why the beleiving Colossians should not minde and affect things on the earth, because they were dead : which is further explained, how farre forth they were dead, even so as notwithstanding they had life : and that life hid, with the manner how, and in whom it was hid (namely, *with Christ in God*.)

Let us now search out the meaning of the words of this verse, (*for ye are dead*) that is with Christ, as wee have it in the Chapter before, verse the twentieth, you being one with Christ by faith are dead with him, that is, as partakers of the power of his death, and are as dead men in regard of sinne, and of worldly happinesse, standing in worldly pleasures, profits and honours, and such like : (*and your life*) That is, your happy life begonne in this world, to be made perfect in the life to come : that perfection of holinesse, and glory, that once yee shall have both in your bodies and soules; and that I gather to bee the meaning of this word (*life*) from the Apostles owne words, in the verse following, where he saith, *that when Christ which is your life shall appeare, then shall yee also appeare with him in glory*. Even in perfection of glory, and so hee doth expound this word (*life*) now hid, to bee that glory that shall bee revealed at the comming of Christ, and that is fulnesse of happinesse and glory, wherewith the bodies and soules of true beleivers shall then bee invested : (*is hid*) that is not onely kept from the eyes of the world, who have no sight of it at all, but in great measure from the eyes of true beleivers themselves, who are therefore said to walke by faith, and not by sight, 2 Corinth. 5. 7. (*with Christ*) that is above in heaven, where Christ is, and is hid as Christ is now hid, who is hid from the eyes of all that live on the earth, he sitting in fulnesse of glory at the right hand of his Father, (*in God*) that is, in the hand of God, in his grace, mercie, and power : for, as it is said, Act chap. 17. vers. 28. *that in God we live, move, and have our being* : our life, our moving, and being in this world is in him (that is) in his hand and power : so the life and glory that shall bee bestowed on true beleivers being (as the Apostle saith) *hid in God* : the meaning is, that it is layd up in his gracious and powerfull hand. Thus then we are to conceive the meaning of the words of this verse, as if the Apostle had said, For ye beleiving in Christ, are partakers of the power of his death, and are as dead men in regard of sinne, and of worldly happinesse : and your happy life (your perfection of holinesse and glory, that once you shall have both in your bodies and soules) is altogether hid from the eyes of the world, and in great measure from your selves (even as Christ now sitting at the right hand of his Father, is hid from the eyes of men on the earth) and is laid up in the gracious and powerfull hand of God.

Now here first we are to observe, that as from having part with Christ in his resurrection, our Apostle in the first verse perswaded to seeke and affect things above, so now from their fellowship with Christ in his death, he dissuades from minding and affecting earthly things. Hee reasons thus, You being partakers

Dott. 1.
Fellowship
with Christ in
his death is a-
ble to make us
as dead men
in regard of
love and affe-
ction of this
life.

Vse.
If we feele not
the power of
Christ his
death making
us as dead in
regard of love
& affection to
earthly things:
wee can have
no comfort in
his death.

with Christ in his death, are as dead men in regard of sinne, and worldly happinesse, therefore doe not you minde and affect earthly things.

Hence wee may take up this conclusion; That fellowship with Christ in his death, the having of part with Christ in the power of his death, is able to make us dead men in regard of our love and affection to the things of this life: It will make our hearts as dead within us, in regard of any affection to earthly things, though we use them, and may lawfully use them: yea if it be abundance of outward things that God hath given us, yet if wee have part with Christ in the power of his death: that will make us that we shall not set our hearts upon them, but in the preparation of our hearts wee shall bee ready to forgoe all things (wee enjoy) for Christ, and for the profession of the Gospel, if we cannot hold them together. For, as the Apostle saith, Gal. 2. 19. they that are Christs are crucified with Christ, and being crucified with him, they have crucified the flesh, with the lusts thereof; and as it is Gal. 5. 24. their affections are crucified, and dead in respect of sinnes, pleasures and the profits of this life, even whatsoever is opposed to the kingdome of Christ, and to a new creature. Let this serve as a ground of trial to every man. We perswade our selves that Christ died for us, and that we have part in his death so our comfort: hereby we may try it: if wee finde Christ his death powerfull in us, to the mortification of our owne wicked wills and carnall affections, that wee are as dead men in regard of love and affection to earthly things, then indeed we have fellowship, and part with Christ in his death to our comfort: but if our hearts and minds be as quick and ready, as lively as ever they were to meditate and thinke of, to love and desire earthly things, and as strongly carried after, and set on those things; whatsoever we say or pretend, it skils not, the truth is, we are neither partakers of the death of Christ, nor have any lively hope of a better life.

Oh that wicked worldlings (whose hearts are glued to the world, and to the things of this world) would but duly consider this: that the setting of their hearts on the honours, pleasures, profits and preferments of this life is a plaine testimony that they have no part in the death of Christ. Indeed it is not possible to bee altogether voyd of all affection to the things of this life, so long as wee are in the body (such is our corruption, and the things themselves are needfull for the maintenance and well being of the body in this world) yet take this with you: if we be dead with Christ, if wee have part with him in the power of his death, certainly our hearts will every day more and more bee weaned, and with drawne from the love, and liking of the things of this earth, and more and more be set on things heavenly; and therefore it is a dangerous case, when men and women grow old, and (in respect of their bodies) are decrepit, decayed and halfe dead, and have one foot as it were in the grave: if then their hearts bee more wedded to the world and set on earthly things, and if then they bee more greedy of the things of this life: without question, that is a dangerous case, it is a signe that they never had part in the power of Christ his death, for that would make their affections (together with their body) by little and little, to die to the things of this world. And let us know, that if wee have no part in the power of Christ his death, wee can have no comfort in the merit of it. Gal. chap. 6. vers. 14. *God forbid (saith the Apostle) that I should rejoyce, but in the Crosse of our Lord Iesus Christ,* and marke what followes: *whereby the world is crucified unto mee, and I unto the world:* where he shewes plainly in the generall, that none can truly glory in the crosse of Christ, but onely they who by the power of it are dead to the world, and the world to them: as for others (that feele not that power) they can no more glory in the crosse of Christ, than a man may glory of the victory his prince hath gotten over his enemies, himselfe in the meane time being a vassall and slave unto them. Let this bee thought on by as many as finde their hearts wholly or chietely set on earthly things, and let

it stirre us up never to rest till we find and feele Christ his death powerfull in us to weane us from the love of the things of this life: yea though we have abundance of them, and hold and enjoy them, yet let not our hearts bee set on them. The Papists say, it is a state of perfection to have nothing to doe with the things of this life: now that is but a fancie, it is rather a state of perfection, or coming neere to perfection (for we are not to dreame of any absolute perfection in this life) in the midst of the abundance of the things of this life, not to have our hearts set upon them.

The next thing we are to consider in this verse, is in these words, (*your life is hid.*)

Hence we are given to understand thus much, that the happinesse and glory, the comfort and joy unspeakeable and glorious, as the Apostle Peter calls it, 1. Pet. 1. 8. of true beleivers begun in this life, and to be made perfect in the life to come, is a thing altogether hid from the eye of the world: the world hath no manner of sight nor apprehension, nor understanding of it, no not so much as a glimpse of it. The world sees the outside of a true beleever, his face, his countenance, his outward gesture and behaviour, and his visible state and condition in the world; but they neither see nor conceive the beauty, and glory that is within, as it is sayd of the Church, Psal. 45. 13. *She is all glorious within*, and that glory the world sees not: and as *Eliphaz* saith, Job. 22. 20. our substance is hid; men of the world may see the colour and outward skin of true beleivers, but they cannot dive into the substance of their happinesse and comfort, begunne (in this life) to be made perfect in the life to come.

One reason of this is given by Saint *Iohn*, 1 Joh. 3. 1. namely this, because the world knowes not God. *Behold* (saith he) *what love the Father hath shewed on us that we should be called the sonnes of God: for this cause the world knoweth you not, because it knoweth not him*: it knowes not God to bee a gracious Father to his children, nor Gods dealing with his children: and therefore it knoweth not their adoption, their happinesse, and the inheritance hee hath provided for them, and the comfort he hath begun in their hearts in this life, and will perfect in the life to come.

Againe, true inward comfort in the heart is a thing strange and unknowne to men of the world, they are not acquainted with it, they never felt it in themselves: and therefore it is not possible they should discern or take knowledge of it in others.

First therefore this may discover unto us whence it is, that wicked prophane persons doe hold the true service of God (performed by true beleivers) a most unprofitable thing, yea the greatest drudgery in the world, and the life of a true Christian, the most heaue, dumpish, and most uncomfortable life that possible can be. Here is the reason of it, they have not eyes to see the comfort of that life: it is hid from them, and they indge other men by themselves; they thinke no prison: so irksome as the Church, no toile more painfull than prayer, hearing the word, receiving the Sacraments; they hold no bondage so grievous, as restraint from sinfull and ungodly courses: yea (as the Apostle Peter saith, 1. Pet. 4. 4. It seemes strange to them, that true beleivers runne not to the same excessse of riot with them: therefore they thinke no misery so bitter as sound and sincere profession of the Gospel, because (indeed) they have no apprehension of the comfort of that life.

Againe, for further use of this point, let the consideration of it arme all true beleivers against scorne and contempt cast upon them, by the wicked and prophane of the world: they are ever censuring true beleivers, deriding their profession, and insulting over their meane and miserable condition (as they thinke of it) and sticke not to say, What difference (I pray you) is betweene them and us, but onely this, wee see they thrive not so well in the world, they are many wayes

Note.

Doff. 2.

The happinesse and glory of true beleivers, prepared for them in the life to come is altogether hid from the eye of the world.

Use 1.

Whence it is that prophane persons doe hold the true service of God which true beleivers yeeld unto him a most unprofitable thing.

Use 2.

Comfort and encouragement of true beleivers against the scorne and contempt that is cast upon them by the wicked world.

Doctr. 3.
Perfection of
happinesse and
holinesse is in
great part hid
from true be-
leevers them-
selves.

Vse.
We are pati-
ently to wait
for the accom-
plishment of
our happinesse
and holinesse.
Note.

Doct. 4.
Christ now in
heaven is hid
from the bo-
dily eyes of all
that live on the
face of the
earth.

Obiect.

Ans.

wales crossed: yea, sometimes they say, they can speake by experience, them-
selves have beene professors as forward as others, and yet never got good by it,
as the Prophet brings in the wicked of his time quarrelling and saying, Mal. 3.
14. *It is in vaine to serve God.* Alas poore soules, let them alone, let not this dis-
courage any one that truly feares God: let us consider that they have no under-
standing of the happinesse and comfort of true beleevers. A sinner cannot dis-
cerne the happinesse of a true Christian, nor conceive how God deales with him,
he is a meere stranger to his joy and comfort, the Manna he feedes on is hidden,
Revel. 2. 17. Therefore let not the murmuring, or the scorne of wicked and pro-
phane persons prevaile in the eares or hearts of any that have understanding.

One thing more note we from hence, namely this: That perfection of hap-
pinesse and holinesse is in great measure hid from true beleevers themselves,
though they have the beginnings of it, yet the fulnesse of it doth not appeare to
them, 1 Ioh. 3. 2. Saint Iohn saith plainly, *that now we are the sonnes of God, but
yet it doth not appeare what wee shall be.* And Rom. 8. 23, 24. *Wee which have the
first fruits of the spirit, even we doe sigh in our selves, waiting for the adoption, even
the redemption of our body.*

Wee ought therefore with patience to wait for the accomplishment of our
happinesse and holinesse: wee are not to thinke (as the wicked doe) that there
is no profit in serving the Lord, unlesse wee have present preferment in this
world: our principall pay will be in the life to come; we have part in hand by
grace in our soules, in this life, and the rest is behinde till the pay-day in the
world to come; yea, let all Gods children herein comfort themselves; they grone
under the burthen of their finnes, and feele the want of holinesse; let them know
that in this life they shall never feele holinesse as they feele sinne. It is an excel-
lent place to this purpose, Gal. 5. 5. the Apostlie there saith, *that through the spi-
rit we wait for the hope of righteousness through faith:* that is, for full revelation
of righteousness imputed: and for the accomplishment of the effect of it, name-
ly, sanctification, we are to wait for it through faith. If we have the first fruits
of the spirit, namely, an hatred of our owne sinne, a purpose of not sinning, and
the true feare of God in our hearts, let us comfort our selves in that, and wait for
fulnesse of grace and holinesse in the life to come. As yet perfection of holines-
se is hid from us, in time it shall be revealed, and we shall come unto it.

Come we to the manner, how the life of true beleevers is hid, expressed by
the Apostlie in these words (*with Christ*) that is, no other wise than Christ is now
hid, who sits at the right hand of his Father, and is hid from the bodily eyes of
all that live on earth. To omit that which heere may bee gathered, that our
happinesse shall not bee hid for ever, but in time be revealed, because it is hid as
Christ is now hid, who in time shall shew himselfe from heaven in glory: of that
we shall more fitly speake in the next verse,

Observe we from these words onely thus much: That the Lord Iesus is now
in heaven, hid from the bodily eyes of all that live on the earth; the Saints in
heaven in their soules now see Christ as hee is in fulnesse of glory, and in their
soules they have immediate fellowship with him; according to that wish of the
Apostlie, Phil. 1. 23. and after the generall resurrection, they shall see him with
their bodily eyes likewise, but hee is yet hid from us now living in this world,
we see him not with our bodily eyes: for as the Apostlie saith, 2 Cor. 5. 6. *While
we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.* He is absent from us in his
body, and we are absent from him, and we see him not, hee is ascended into hea-
ven: and as Peter saith, Act. 3. 21. *Heaven must containe him untill the time that
all things be restored.*

Christ hath beene seene of some, whiles they lived here in this world, as of
Stephen, Act. 7. 55. and of Paul in his journey, Act. 9.

Let this bee granted, that Christ was seene of some yet living in this world,
yet

yet we must know their sight of Christ was extraordinary. And againe, it can never be proved that they saw him out of heaven. The text is plaine, that Stephen looked stedfastly into heaven; and that Christ also spake to Paul from heaven, from whence the glorious light shined: and yet a learned Papist in a booke lately published, takes on him by warrant of that apparition of Christ to Paul, Act. 9. to prove that Christ his body (*de facto*) that is, actually, hath bene in two places at once; but hee can never from thence evince it, either by plaine evidence, or good consequence: doubtlesse that apparition was from heaven, Christ still being in heaven, and it was extraordinary: and we are to hold it for a truth, that Christ is now in heaven, hid from the eyes of all that live on the earth: and let us make this use of it.

Seeing it is so, that Christ is hid from our bodily eyes, let us labour to see him with a spiritall eye, even with the eye of faith, as the Apostle Peter, 1 Epist. 1. 8. saith, *Labour that we may believe in him though we see him not.* Now because every one will thinke with himselfe, surely this lesson is soone learned, though I see not Christ with my bodily eye, yet I doe eye, and looke on him by faith. And herein the Divell doth delude many a poore soule, making it thinke it doth eye Christ by faith, when indeed it doth not. That wee be not therefore herein deceived, we must know that we are to eye Christ by faith, as he is set before us to be looked on in the Word and Sacraments, for so is Christ the proper object of faith: wee are to looke on him by faith as a perfect Mediator, God and man in one person, and so to eye the vertue and sufficiency of his meritorious obedience both active and passive; even the merit both of his fulfilling of the Law in his life, and of his suffering the cursed death of the Crosse: for thus is Christ propounded and set before us, to be looked on in the Word and Sacraments. Many an ignorant person thinkes hee doth eye Christ by faith, when hee hath onely a generall and confused notion of Christ: hee living in the bosome of the Church cannot chuse but heare of Christ: but he hath no understanding of the personall union of his God-head and man-hood, and hee is not able to distinguish betweene his active and passive obedience, and he knowes not whence it is, that Christ his obedience is of infinite merit and sufficiency. Well, thus are wee to eye Christ by faith, even as a perfect Mediator, God, and man, in one person, and so the infinite value and merit of his obedience, both active and passive. And if wee doe thus by faith eye Christ, without question, that is unto us a ground of lively comfort. We then see Christ, and (in him) unspeakable joy and comfort; wee see the curse of the Law, and condemnation removed: our finnes washed away in his blood, and that wee in him have right and title to all the comforts of the Saints of God in this life, and for ever. And if wee doe not thus see Christ to our comfort, certainly, we shall one day see him to our everlasting confusion.

Come we now to the last words of this verse, wherein the Apostle doth expresse in whom the happy life of true believers is hid, namely, *in God.* And before I come to that I chiefly intended to stand on in handling of these words, I hold it not amisse (upon occasion of these words) to discover a shift that the Papists have devised to uphold their Intercession of Saints, and their prayers to Saints departed. They being pressed by us after this manner, that to pray to them, is to ascribe unto them, that which is proper to God alone, even to know the hearts and inward desires of men.

They answer, that the Saints in heaven doe clearely behold God, and see him face to face; now (say they) God containeth all things in himselfe, yea the inward comfort that is in the hearts of true believers in this life; and therefore though the Saints departed doe not see the secrets of our hearts, as they are in our hearts; yet being present to the face of God, they doe behold it in all things, (as it were) in a most cleere glasse: this is their shift, which indeede is a mere forgery.

Vse.

Wee must labour to see Christ now hid from our bodily eyes, with a spiritall eye of faith. How we are to eye Christ by faith.

A Popish shift discovered.

forgery, and a vaine device of an idle braine, without all warrant of the word of God. We finde it not in any place of Scripture, that the Saints in heaven, beholding God face to face, doe in him (as in a glasse) see the comfort that is in the hearts of true believers, which the Apostle here saith is hid in God, and other things said, or done on the earth: that conceit is contrary to the Scripture, which teacheth, that God alone searcheth the hearts, and secret thoughts of men, and we finde that the Angels, who behold the face of God in heaven, are notwithstanding ignorant of many things: as of the wisdom of God, in calling and saving the Gentiles, Ephes. 3. 10. and of the day of iudgement; and they know not the thoughts of mens hearts, unlesse it please God by speciall dispensation to reveale them unto them (the Lord using their ministry for the good of his chosen) much lesse doe the Saints departed know them, whom the Lord never useth as ministering Spirits, as hee doth the good Angels: and if the Saints departed did, or might know things done or said here on earth, as well as God; yet it followes not, that therefore wee should pray to them, having neither commandement nor promise, nor example in Scripture, to warrant such kinde of prayer. We see then that this is but a meere shift of the Papists to blind the world withall, that the Saints in heaven beheld the face of God, and in him see all things, and therefore wee may pray to them.

Now in that the Apostle saith, that the life of true believers is hid in God, we are given to understand thus much: that the happinesse and comfort of true believers (began in this life, to be made perfect in the life to come, and laid up in the gracious and powerfull hand of God) it is hid in his grace, mercy, and power: for indeed it resteth in the gracious promise of God: by his free promise they have right unto it, and hold it: and as the Apostle Peter saith, 1 Epist. 1. 5. *They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.* Their eternall happinesse is kept for them, and they for it, and both of them by the power of God. And hence it is, that God is said to be the God of consolation, Rom. 15. 5. as indeed the fontaine and store-house of all true comfort: and hence it is that the Apostle saith, 1 Tim. 6. 16. *That hee onely hath immortality, and dwelleth in the light that none can attain unto.* He onely hath immortall and eternall life of glory in himselfe by nature, and doth give it to whom he will, and he will give it in time to all true believers.

Now this is of excellent use. First, hence we are taught, where we are to seeke and to looke for life, breathing, and true comfort in time of any distresse: even at the hand of God, who onely hath it in his keeping; it is neither men nor Angels that of themselves can give it unto us, but onely God. Whither will a man that needes any thing goe, but where hee knowes supply is to be had? If he need but water, he will goe to the Well or Conduit; so we in time of sickness, or any other distresse, standing in need of comfort, are to goe to God, in whose hand is laid up the happinesse and comfort of all his children, and we are by earnest supplication and prayer, to sue for it at his hand, and then doubtlesse (if wee be in the number of those to whom his promise belongs) wee shall not faile to obtaine it: through his promise, the Lord is become a voluntary debtor unto us; and our comfort being laid up in his promise, and wee suing to him according to his promise, and resting our selves on his promise, wee cannot misse of it in time of need, and wee are not to doubt of it; for God is faithfull who hath made the promise, Heb. chap. 10. vers. 23. If God can be unfaithfull, then doubt of comfort in time of need; but it is impossible that God should be unfaithfull; therefore make no question of it, but that we shall finde it in time of need. And consider further with thy selfe; dost thou believe there is eternall happinesse and comfort in heaven, laid up for thee in the hand of the Lord? and wilt thou then doubt whether there be comfort for thee in his hand in time of this life, and in this world, or no? Oh let it be far from thee remember that

Doct. 5.
The happinesse and comfort of true believers is laid up in the grace, mercy, and power of God.

Vse 1.
Wee are to seeke and to looke for life and true comfort in all our distresses at the hand of God.

that God is faithfull, as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 10. 13. and will not suffer thee to be tryed above thy strength, but will either enable thee to beare thy triall with comfort, or give thee deliverance out of it as shall be best for his glory, and thy good.

Againe, is it so that the happinesse and comfort of true believers is laid up in the gracious hand of God? then let us know that it is kept most safe and sure. At the first, God trusted man with his owne happinesse, and hee wittingly and willingly lost it, but now it is kept in the hand of God, and therefore it is most safe, as the Apostle saith, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *He is able to keepe that which is committed unto him, &c.* Yea, the happinesse and true comfort of true believers is so safely kept in the hand of God, that neither the fraud nor force of the world; or the Divell without, or the flesh within, can deprive them of it, though the Divell and his instruments, maliciously purpose by their vexations, to make Gods children miserable, yet can they not doe it, they cannot come neere their happinesse; it is not onely hid from their eyes, that they cannot see it to hurt it; but it is hid in God, whom they neither eas, nor dare assault. Yea that which Gods children hold it by is hid from them, even the hope of true believers, as an Anchor that is cast within the velle of heaven, Heb. chap. 6. verf. 19. If then we have in us the beginning of heavenly life and comfort, let us assure our selves wee shall never be deprived of it; the fulnesse and perfection of that comfort is laid up in the powerfull hand of God, and nothing is able to wrest or wring it out of his hand: indeed if it were committed to our trust, and left in our hands, to hold or to loose, wee had iust cause (as the Papists teach) to doubt of the holding of it; but wee must remember, it is laid up in the gracious hand of God, even in the promise of God, who cannot lie; and it is built on the eternall love of God from which nothing can divide us, Rom. 8. 39. and upon the unchangeable decree of God that stands fast for evermore, and therefore the assurance of eternall happinesse wrought in the hearts of true believers, is built on a rocke which never shall be shaken.

Verf. 4. *When Christ which is our life shall appeare, then shall ye also appeare with him in glory.*

IN this Verse our Apostle makes knowne to the Colossians believing in Christ, the time when their happy life (now hid in Christ) shall be fully revealed, namely, *at the appearance of the Lord Iesus when Christ shall appeare, then saith the Apostle, Shall ye also appeare with him in glory.* Then shall your happy life appeare: and so he doth prevent a secret demand the Colossians might have made: for they might have said, You tell us our happy life is hid with Christ in God; but when shall wee have that life, and when shall it be manifested? our Apostle answers, when Christ shall appeare, then it shall be manifested. Now this is not barely propounded, that at the appearance of Christ their happy life shall appeare; but it is further amplified.

1 First by a description of Christ: That he is the life of true believers, *When Christ which is our life shall appeare.*

2 And then by a description of their estate and condition, in respect of that happinesse and glory that then shall be given them: That they shall then be invested with it, and appeare with Christ most glorious: *Then shall ye also appeare with him in glory.*

Wee see then, the Apostle here makes knowne the time when the happinesse and glory of true believers shall be manifested, namely, *When Christ shall appeare.*

And hee describes Christ to be the life of true believers.

And he sets down the state of true believers, in respect of that glory that then shall

Use 2.

The happinesse and comfort of true believers is in a sure hand, being laid up in the glorious hand of God.

Interpre-
tation

When
The originall word here translated [when] hath an indefinite signification, it properly signifies, whensoever, at what time soever, sooner or later. [our life] The Apostle said before, yet are dead, and your life, &c. and it might seeme he should have so continued his speech in the second person [ye] but here hee changeth his terme and saith [our life] meaning the life of us Jewes, and of you Gentiles, when Christ the life of all believers both Jewes and Gentiles [life] the word [life] is put by a Metonymie, by an usuall manner of speech in Scripture, for the Author and manner of spirituall and heavenly life; for it is Christ that is the efficient cause of our spirituall life, and in him it consisteth: and thus himselfe saith, Ioh. chap. 11. vers. 15. I am the resurrection, and the life: that is, I am the author both of this life, and the life to come; I raise up the body from death to life, I quicken in this life by the life of grace, and I give eternall life in the world to come. [shall appeare] that is, shall shew himselfe from heaven in his glory; as it is, Matth. chap. 25. vers. 31. shall come the second time of glory to judge the world: and thus doth the Apostle plainly expound himselfe, 2 Tim. chap. 4. vers. 8. where he saith, Henceforth is laid up for me the Crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Iudge shall give me at that day: that is, at the day of iudgement: and then he addes further, and not unto me onely, but unto all them also that love his appearing. Where wee see hee makes Christ his coming to iudgement and his appearing, all one. Thus then wee are to understand these words, as if the Apostle had said; Whensoever Christ (who is the Author and matter of the spirituall life of all true believers, both Jewes and Gentiles) shall shew himselfe from heaven in his glory to judge the world, then shall ye also appeare with him in glory.

shall be given them, that they then shall be possessed of it, and appeare with Christ in glory. Come we now to the words of this verse: and first of these words [When Christ which is our life shall appeare].

[When] The originall word here translated [when] hath an indefinite signification, it properly signifies, whensoever, at what time soever, sooner or later. [our life] The Apostle said before, yet are dead, and your life, &c. and it might seeme he should have so continued his speech in the second person [ye] but here hee changeth his terme and saith [our life] meaning the life of us Jewes, and of you Gentiles, when Christ the life of all believers both Jewes and Gentiles [life] the word [life] is put by a Metonymie, by an usuall manner of speech in Scripture, for the Author and manner of spirituall and heavenly life; for it is Christ that is the efficient cause of our spirituall life, and in him it consisteth: and thus himselfe saith, Ioh. chap. 11. vers. 15. I am the resurrection, and the life: that is, I am the author both of this life, and the life to come; I raise up the body from death to life, I quicken in this life by the life of grace, and I give eternall life in the world to come. [shall appeare] that is, shall shew himselfe from heaven in his glory; as it is, Matth. chap. 25. vers. 31. shall come the second time of glory to judge the world: and thus doth the Apostle plainly expound himselfe, 2 Tim. chap. 4. vers. 8. where he saith, Henceforth is laid up for me the Crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Iudge shall give me at that day: that is, at the day of iudgement: and then he addes further, and not unto me onely, but unto all them also that love his appearing. Where wee see hee makes Christ his coming to iudgement and his appearing, all one. Thus then wee are to understand these words, as if the Apostle had said; Whensoever Christ (who is the Author and matter of the spirituall life of all true believers, both Jewes and Gentiles) shall shew himselfe from heaven in his glory to judge the world, then shall ye also appeare with him in glory.

First, observe we here that the Apostle speaking of the appearance of Christ to iudgement; he speaks indefinitely, he doth not define the time, hee sets not downe any certaine day, moneth, year, or age, when Christ shall appeare to iudgement; but he saith, Whensoever Christ shall appeare.

Hence wee are plainly taught thus much: That the time of Christ his coming to iudgement is to us uncertian, no man can set downe the certaine time of his appearance, no man knowes certainly when it shall be: and for this we have Christ his owne warrant, Matth. 24. 36. Of that day and houre knoweth no man. Yea, hee addes further, Mark. 13. 32. Of that day and houre knoweth no man, neyther the Angells which are in heaven, neither the Sonne himselfe, save the Father. Which may be understood, either as Christ is man, or as hee was then in the state of humiliation; in the forme of a servant, howsoever we understand it. Hence it is cleere, that the day and time of Christ his appearance to iudgement is uncertaine, both to man and Angels, neither men, nor Angels, can define the certaine time of his coming to iudgement.

First therefore, wee are not curiously to search into the time of Christ his coming to iudgement, howsoever by the fore going signes of it being fulfilled and come to passe, we may know it is not to be farre off; yet we are not to take on us to know the certaine day and houre, no not the moneth, yeere, or age when Christ will come to iudgement, that is not revealed in the Scripture, and it is curiosity to search into it.

Again, is it so that the time of Christ his coming to iudgement is to us uncertaine? then wee are to live in continuall expectation of it, and to follow the counsell of Christ, Iuke 21. 34. Even so take heed to our selves, lest that day come upon us at unawares. Where (by the way) observe this the day of iudgement is like to surprize and come unawares on them that are given over to sensuall pleasures,

Dott. 1.
The time of
Christs com-
ming to iudge-
ment is to us
uncertaine.

Use 1.
Wee are not
curiously to
search into the
time of Christ
his comming
to iudgement.

Use 2.
We are to live
in continuall
expectance of
Christ, his
comming to
iudgement.

Note.

pleasures, are drowned in the cares of this life, but in regard of the uncertaine time of Christ his coming to judgement, it concerns us everie day to looke for it, and to make account of every present day, as of the day of his coming. For as one saith well, the last day is therefore unknowen, that wee might be ready every day, and howsoever wee cannot exactly make account of Christ his coming to the generall judgement, yet we may well reckon on the Lords coming unto us by death, and of the day of our particular judgement, wee may well reckon of that not to be farre off: wee see the yonger and stronger come as soone to the grave as the weakest, and most aged, and let us know that as death leaves us, so shall judgement finde us. *Saul, Iudas, and Kain* died long since desperately, and the Lord at his coming shall finde them in the same state, and so it will bee with thee: in what state soever thou dost, so shall the Lord finde thee at his coming to judgement, therefore make ready for death, make account of it every houre.

How is that will some say?

Answer, looke what thou wouldest doe at the houre of thy death, if now thou wert gasping for breath on thy death bed, or diddest see the Lord Jesus coming in the clouds, doe that very same thing every day, live up thine heart, and labour to be assured of thine owne salvation: and whatsoever thou dost doe it with such zeale and fervency, with such feare, with such sincerity of inward affection, as if forthwith thou wert to yeeld up the Ghost: and presume not thou on length of daies, do not thou indeede make a covenant with death, as the Prophet saith of the wicked, *Isay 28. 15.* putting death farre from thee, and so grow to a deadnesse and senselesse security in sinne. *Marth. 24. 28.* Our Saviour makes deadnesse of heart one signe of the last judgement, and doubtlesse it is a signe of particular judgement, imminent & hanging over thine head, when thou art careless, and dost put that farre from thee, which may suddenly come upon thee. *Genes. 22. 24.* Wee read that when *Job*s friends fleered and laughed at *Job*, and thought with themselves, *Let* told them how some little dreame of his owne head: then was judgement hard at hand, and the Sermon doth much say on this point, that the day of the Lord shall come even as a theefe in the night. *1 Thess. 5. 2. 3.* Therefore take thou heed of this deadnesse of heart, put not that farre from thee which may shortly fall upon thee: remember that the Lords coming, either to generall or particular judgement, is to thee uncertaine, thou knowest not when it shall bee: live then in continuall expectation of it, waite thou and be every day ready for the appearing of the Lord Jesus.

In the next place wee are to observe that which the Apostle here addes by way of description of Christ, hee saith not simply when Christ shall appeare, but *when Christ our life shall appeare*: hence men are given to understand thus much.

That Christ is the life of all true believers, even of all that looke for his appearance to their comfort: hee is the author and master of their spirituall life. Now for the right conceiving of this point, and the further feeling of it in our understandings, wee are to consider, how Christ is the author and master of the spirituall life of true believers: and to this purpose know that Christ is the author of spirituall life, as the root of it, having it himselfe, and conveying it to all that beleave in him, hence is hee said to bee the true Vine, and they the branches. *John 15. 5.* Again, hee is not onely the author of spirituall life, as is God the Father, and the holy Ghost, but hee is the master of it, and in him is consisteth, because hee only is the propitiation for sinne. *1 John 2. 2.* Hee only is the expiatory sacrifice, for sinne the cause of death, and in him is perfect righteousness to life eternall, even to the justification of life as the Apostle speaks, *Rom. 8. 34.*

They deceive
themselves
who looke that
Christ shall
come to them
before they
be converted
and have
repented
of their
sins.

Quo

De 1

Christ is the
life of all that
looke for his
appearance to
their comfort.

Quest

Answer

Now if it be asked how this spirituall life is conveyed from Christ to them that beleeve?

I answer, by vertue of that true and neere union that is betwene Christ and his members, they being truly united to him by the bond of his Spirit, and by faith, even flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, (for so must wee be one with Christ) wee must (as himselfe saith, Ioh. 6. 53.) *eat his flesh and drinke his blood*, before we can have life abiding in us. True beleevers being thus truly united to Christ, Christ by his Spirit doth communicate first himselfe to them, and then both the merit of his death for remission of their finnes, and of his active obedience for their right to life and salvation, and withall, the power of his Spirit to quicken them to the life of grace in this world, and to raise up their bodies to the life of glory in the day of judgement.

Thus then are wee to conceive this point. True beleevers being truly and neerely united to Christ, by the bond of his Spirit, and by faith: Christ lives in them as a root in the branches, and by his Spirit doth communicate to them, both himselfe and all his merits, for remission of their finnes and perfect justification, and also the power of his Spirit to quicken them to the life of grace here, and to raise up their dead bodies to life everlasting, happinesse, and glory in the life to come. And this Saint Iohn teacheth plainly, 1 Ioh. 5. 11, 12. *God (saith he) hath given to us eternall life, and this life is in his Sonne: he that hath the Sonne hath life, and he that hath not the Sonne of God hath not life.* Where hee sheweth plainly that in Christ is life eternall, and as many as are one with him, have Christ himselfe, and having him they have that life that is in him: Christ is the author and maker of their spirituall life.

Let this be thought on to this purpose. For so that Christ is the life of all true beleevers, even of all that looke for his coming and apperance to their comfort: then thinke on it and deceive not thy selfe. If thou finde not Christ thy life, never looke that hee shall appere to thy comfort. The Apostle saith so, when Christ shall appere then shall wee also appere with him in glory, but when Christ our life shall appere, &c. And wee are to consider it, and hence to take knowledge of it, that they speake foolishly, who say, If I be appointed to life and salvation, I shall come to it howsoever I live. That is a meere delusion of Satan: as God hath appointed the end, so hath hee appointed the meanes and way to come to that end. Christ himselfe fled from Herod, Matth. chap. 2. verl. 14. and yet was hee appointed of God to live his time, which neither Herod nor any other could prevent: therefore they reason foolishly that so speake and know it for a truth, that Christ must be thy life, Christ must be the matter of thy spirituall life, and must live in thee, Gal. 2. 20. or else never looke thou for life and glory by him.

Haply some will say: How shall I know that Christ lives in me?

Thou shalt know it by the working of his Spirit in thee. Where the Spirit of Christ is, hee works a purpose, and an inclination of heart to obey God in all his commandments, even a delight in the Law of God, Rom. 7. 25. and a minde and disposition like to Christ, Phil. 2. 5. cheerefully to doe the will of God, and as willingly to seeke Gods glory, and the good of our brethren, as to eat when we are hungry, and to drinke when we are thirstie: and hee workes a love to Christ for himselfe, and of the members of Christ, even because they are his members: 1 Ioh. chap. 3. verl. 14. *We know that we are translated from death unto life, because wee love the brethren.* If these things be in thee in some measure, then indeed Christ is thy life, and shall one day appere to thy comfort: yea, Christ being thy life, that life can never be abolished, Christ died once, and now lives for ever. Therefore having Christ thy life, take this for thy comfort, thou canst not but live eternally: but on the contrary, if the things (before spoken of) be wanting in thee, then certainly thou must looke for no comfort by Christ

7th.
They deceive themselves, who looke that Christ shall appere to their comforts, and yet finde him not in their life.

Quest.

Answer

Christ is the life of the
soul, and the
soul is the
life of the
body.

at his comming, thou art in death, and shalt abide in death, and dye eternally, and be damned in hell.

One thing more is offered unto us from these words, in that the Apostle saith, (*When Christ which is our life shall appear* :) We are taught, that Christ in time shall certainly appeare to judge the world in power and great glory, hee shall appeare both God and man of infinite glory, attended with his mighty Angels, 2 Theff. 1. 7. His glory shall be such that the powers of heaven shall bee shaken, Matth. 24. 29. Yea, the heavens shall passe away with a noise, and the elements shall melt with heat, &c. 2 Pet. 3. 10. Seeing therefore such shall bee the glorious appearance of Christ at his comming to judgement, what manner of persons ought we to be in holy conversation and godlinesse?

This use the Apostle Peter makes of it, 2 Pet. 3. 11. Wee live now in those dayes the Apostle speaks of, in that Chapter, verf. 3, 4. *Wherein wicked men walk after their owne lusts, and say, where is the promise of his comming? &c.* and make even a mocke at the day of judgement, and feare not the glorious appearance of Christ, and here they are worse than the Devill, who trembles at the remembrance of that day. Well, one day they shall tremble and quake, and bee overwhelmed with horror, and (when Christ shall appeare in glory) not bee able to endure the fire of his wrath. Let as many as love the Lord Jesus shake off securitie, and stand in continuall awe of his glorious comming; let our hearts bee now smitten with a reverent feare of it, and let us prepare to meet the Lord at his comming, that we may be able to stand before him with joy, and then lift up our heads, because our redemption shall bee at hand.

Come wee now to the description of the state of true beleevers, in respect of that happinesse and glory which they shall have at the appearance of Christ, in these words (*then shall yee also appeare with him in glorie*;) where the Apostle doth shew that true beleevers shall then be possessed of that glory, and shall appeare with Christ most glorious. (*Then*) This word hath relation to the words immediately going before (*ye*) that is, ye beleevers who have Christ your life: and we are to understand that word as spoken of the persons of true beleevers, not of their soules alone separate from their bodies, nor of their bodies alone: then shall yee in your bodies and soules (*appeare*) that is, be manifestly seene of men and Angels (*with him*) namely with Christ (*in glorie*) that is, most gloriously invested with eternall and unspeakable glory. Thus then conceive wee these words, as if the Apostle had said: Then at the appearance of Christ, shall yee bee manifestly seene with Christ, invested in your bodies and soules with eternall and unspeakable glorie.

Now first in that the Apostle saith, that at the appearance of Christ, true beleevers shall appeare with him in glory, we may easily conclude.

That the happinesse and glory of true beleevers shall not alwayes be hid, but it shall one day appeare even to the whole world, yea both men and Angels shall one day, namely, at the day of judgement, see the happinesse and glory of true beleevers, and be eye-witnesses of the same: for why? the Lord Jesus at that day shall shew himselfe to the sight of men and Angels, in endlesse Majesty and glorie in his owne person: and he shall at that day come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be made marvellous in all them that beleeve: so speaks the Apostle in plaine termes, 2 Theff. 1. 10. At his comming hee shall not onely bee infinitely glorious in his owne person, but hee shall also be glorified in his Saints, hee glorifying them, and they appearing with him in glory: there in they shall shew forth his grace, his power, and his goodnesse, and that to the astonishment and admiration of all that shall looke upon them, even to the amazement of men and Angels, Rom. 8. 19. the Apostle in saying, that *the creature, that is, the whole frame of the world, waiteth when the sons of God shall be revealed*: teacheth also this point, that there shall be a time of revelation, there

No 2

shall

Doctr. 3.

Christ shall in time certainly appeare to judge the world in power & great glory.

Vse.

Wee are to stand in continuall awe of Christ his glorious comming to judgement.

*the blessed
and elect
shall be
glorified
with him
in glory*

Interpre-
tation.

Doctr. 4.

The happinesse and glorie of true beleevers shall one day appeare and be seene of men and Angels.

*to the
glory
of
the
Father
in
the
Son
by
the
Holy
Spirit*

Reason.

shall come a day, when the glory of Gods children shall bee revealed to all the world, the reason of this is plaine, namely this.

Because there must bee a time, when even the most wicked shall justify the goodnesse and mercie of God, in his dealing towards his children, and be convinced of folly in themselves: now that is not in this world. Here they looke on the troubles of Gods children, but see not their comforts, they behold their present condition in affliction, but discern not their happinesse, and so account their life folly and madnesse: therefore there must be a time when the happiness and glorie of Gods children shall be openly revealed, and set before the eyes of all the world, that even the most wicked may look on it, and (will they nill they) justify the goodnesse of God towards his children, and bee convinced of folly in themselves, and be forced to confesse and say, Oh, wee fooles thought their life folly and madnesse, but now wee see they are deare in the sight of the Lord, and have their portion among his Saints.

Yse.
Comfort to
true beleevers,
that their
beaurie and
glorie shall one
day be made
manifest to the
view of the
whole world.

Now then let this bee laid up in the hearts of all true beleevers, as a ground of great comfort to them, let them consider, that howsoever their beauty and glory is in this world obscured and overshadowed, and is not seene of the world, it lyes hid from the world, either under affliction, or under the excellent grace of humillity, which the world accounts basenesse, they walking humbly before the Lord: that humillity of theirs is as a cloud to hide away their glory from the eye of the world, yet let them be patient for a time, and let them consider that it shall not alwayes bee hid, but the time will come, when it shall evidently appeare, and bee open to the view of the whole world, yea the time shall come that men and Angels shall see it with admiration, yea which is most sweet and comfortable to be thought on, even they that here have turned their glory into shame, as *David* saith, *Psal. 4. 2.* that is, have reproached them for their holy and religious carriage, and cast that in their teeth as a reproach, and loded them with odious and foule names even in respect of that, the day shall come when they shall see that (which now they account their shame) crowned with glory, and shall be forced to change their note and sing a new song, yea, confessing their owne folly shall cry out and say: Wee fooles thought their life base and full of dishonour, and now behold their unspeakable brightnesse and glory. Let this be remembered as a matter of sweet comfort to all Gods children, yea, let this encourage them even to bee more vile, as *David* saith, *2 Sam. 6. 22.* when *Mischol* mocked him for dancing before the Arke, *I will yet be more vile than thou*, so let all Gods children be more vile, that is, more low in their owne eyes, and walke more humbly before the Lord, and so be more base (as the world esteemes of them) and the time shall come, when they shall bee had in honour of those that now contemne them: yea those that now despise them (if they repent not of that sinne) at the comming of the Lord Iesus shall see them in glory, and shall be forced to acknowledge their glory to their owne everlasting shame and confusion.

We are in the next place to observe, the Apostle saith not, then shall your soules, or then shall your bodies appeare with him in glory, but then shall ye, even ye, in your bodies and soules appeare with Christ in glory.

D.H.S.

The glorie of true beleevers shall not have full accom-
plishment till the second
coming of
Christ.

Hence we are taught : that there shall not be a perfect consummation of the glorie of true beleevvers before the day of judgement : true beleevvers shall not have full accomplishment of glory, before the second comming of Christ, then shall they in their bodier and soules appeare with Christ in glory. Though the Saints of God now in Heaven be blessed, Revel. 14. 13. yer they looke for the perfection of their glory, when their bodies shall bee glorified together, with their soules at the generall judgement. Much is given to true beleevvers when they are dissolved, and goe to Christ, but most of all shall be given them when they shall be restored, and Christ come to them as Saint *Iohn* saith, 1. 3. *when he*

appeare they shall be like him: not onely in their soules but in their bodies also, the text is plaine, Phil. 3. 21. *hee shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body*: and then their bodies and soules joynd together, and glorified together must needs (even in reason) make a full weight and measure of glory: Rev. 6. 10. We read that the soules under the Altar: cry *how long Lord*: as (indeed) expecting, and earnestly desiring the last judgement, when Christ shall glorifie himselfe in executing vengeance on the enemies of his Church, and give all his members glorie, both in their bodies and soules, and therefore the Saints in Heaven are in expectation of greater glory.

If any object against this, the example of *Enoch* and *Elijah*, that they in their bodies are already in Heaven, and therefore have a perfect consummation of their glory, and looke not for any greater measure of glory.

I answer, it may be doubted whether their bodies bee now in Heaven or no, some make question of it, and hold that their bodies are not now in heaven, but either that the Lord (who took them away) hath laid them up in such places as are hid from us, as hee hid the body of *Moses* that the Devill looking for it could not finde it: but to leave that to bee discussed by better judgement, I admit to bee true, that *Enoch* and *Elijah* are now glorified in heaven, in their bodies, yet wee must know that these examples are extraordinary, the Lord tooke them up into heaven, that they might bee types and figures of Christ his ascension, and to nourish hope of life eternall in the Church, both before the Law, and under the Law, and therefore they make not against this, that the Saints in Heaven are yet in hope and expectation of full fruition of the promised glory. And this meets with the opinion of the Papists, who are not content to say that the Saints in heaven are blessed, but they give them a full possession of blessednesse, yea, they affirme that they are as highly exalted in heaven as the Angels, grounding on that saying of Christ, *Matth. 22. 30* whereas indeed if wee looke upon that place, and consider it well, we shall finde it rather makes against them, for it is said, *That the Saints shall be as the Angels of God in heauen*: but when it is the resurrection, at the generall resurrection, and not before, and againe it is not said, that after the resurrection they shall bee in every respect like to the Angels, for then they shall bee without bodies as the Angels bee, but they shall bee as the Angels, in that then they shall have no need nor use of marriage: that is the meaning of our Saviour in that place, and so it makes nothing for the purpose of our adversaries, to prove that the Saints now in heaven are as highly exalted in honor as the Angels. And we are not to suffer our selves by this to be driven from the truth, that the Saints in heaven though they bee blessed, yet have not obtained perfect consummation of glory: but wee expect it to bee given at the day of judgement: yea, the first member of Christ that died many hundred yeeres agoe, shall not receive fulnesse of glory in body and soule, till the last member be ready.

And upon this ground wee may lawfully pray that the Lord Jesus would hasten his comming to judgement, and make perfect the glory of his Saints in heaven and earth. Mistake not my meaning, I say not, that wee may pray for the dead, but wee may pray that the Lord would make an end of the day of sinne, that he would hasten the comming of Christ, that he would give us deliverance from all the miseries of this life, Rom. 8. 23. and in his good time (his kingdome of grace being finished) give fulnesse of glory to all his Saints, both in their bodies and soules.

Observe wee further that the Apostle saith not, (then shall yee appeare in glory) but *then shall yee appeare with him* (namely) with Christ in glory. Hereby wee are given to understand this much.

That as Christ and his members cannot bee divided one from another, so Christ his glory, and the glory of his members cannot bee disjoynd nor put asunder.

Object.

Ans.

Ans.

Vse 1.

Confutation of the opinion of the Papists, touching the blessednesse of the Saints in heaven.

Vse 2.

We may lawfully pray that the second comming of Christ may be hastened.

Dof. 3.

Christ his glory and the glory

ry of his members goe together.

Reasons.

Use 1.

Comfort to all that have part in Christ, they shall certainly appeare most glorious at the day of judgement.

Quest

Ans.

Use 2.

We are earnestly to long for Christ his comming to judgement.

Note.

asunder when Christ shall appeare in his glory, then shall also all true beleevens be seene with him shining in unspeakable glory. With the full manifestation of the glory of Christ, shall goe a full manifestation of the glory of all his members. The reason of this is given in the place aforesaid, 2 Thess. 1. 10.

Because the glorification of the Saints, even of all true beleevens, pertaines to the glory of Christ, and the one cannot be without the other.

Now then, what an excellent comfort is this to as many as finde themselves to have part in Christ? no sooner shall Christ appeare in his glory, but they also shall appeare with him most glorious: and indeed it cannot be otherwise, it is his will it should be so, Ioh. 17. 24. that all his members should bee with him where he is, and be partakers of his glory: can the head Christ Iesus raigne in endlesse glory, and his members be covered with shame and dishonour? It is not possible: remember it to thy comfort, if thou bee a member of Christ, his glory, and thy glory cannot bee sundred, and know thou that it is as possible that Christ should not be glorious, as that thou shouldst not appeare in glory at the day of Iudgement.

Now if any aske me what this glory shall be?

I must answer him, if I had the tongues of men and Angels, I am not able to expresse it, the Apostle is faine to expresse it in generall termes, 2 Cor. 4. 17. *A most excellent, and an eternall weight of glorie.* Yet certainly it shall not be equall to the glory of Christ, but like it, the text is plaine: 1 Ioh. 3. 2. *When he shall appeare we shall be like him.* Phil. 3. 21. *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto his most glorious body.* The bodies of true beleevens shall shine in glory, like the glorious body of Christ, and they shall be glorious in their measure according to his image, who is the God of glory: they shall then be decked and trimmed, as a Bride futable, and fit for a most pure and glorious Bridegroom, Revel. 29. 8. even in the bright shining roabe of righteousness, and in most pure and perfect holiness.

Oh then, how ought this to affect our hearts with a longing desire after the comming of the Lord Iesus, that even now wee might see him comming in the clouds? Doe we heare no sooner that Christ shall appeare, but we beleeving in Christ shall appeare in glory like to him, and do we beleve this? If we beleve it not, why come we to heare it? do we then beleve this to be true, & shall we not long to see the truth of it? Indeed if that great glory spoken of were uncertaine, or certaine glory but small: it might be but small inducement to long after it: but seeing it is so sure that we shall have glory as Christ himselfe the God of glory, and that an unspeakable weight of glory: shall not this quicken and stir up our spirits? Shall not this move us to long for the time when it shall be revealed? Surely if we looke for our part of that eternall weight of glory, we cannot but fervently desire after it, and crie out with the Church, Revel. 22. 10. *Come quickly Lord Iesus.* And if thou hast not this longing in thee, thine heart is not right in thee, and if thy desire be feeble and weak, seeke to be quickned. Labour thou to have a lively hope to be partaker of that glory that shall be revealed, and then thine heart shall be filled with abundance of comfort, and thou shalt earnestly long for the appearance of the Lord Iesus.

Verf. 5. Manifeste therefore your members which are on the earth, fornication, uncleanness, the inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is idolatrie.

Our Apostle having finished his exhortation, to seeke and affect things above, and urged that on the Colossians, in the foure first verses: in this fifth verse hee comes to his exhortation to Christian duties of the morall Law: and first he exhorts to duties required in the Commandements of the second Table, from

from this verse to the end of the 15. and this exhortation stands on two parts.

The first is to the mortification and pulling away of such vices and finnes as are forbidden in the second Table, from this verse to the 12.

And the second part is, to the putting on, and taking to themselves such virtues as there are required, from vers. 12. to the 16.

Now the Apostles exhortation to the mortification of sinne, is againe twofold.

The first is to the mortification of such sins as were neare and deare to themselves, and did properly belong to their owne pleasure and profits; and that is laid downe, and urged by certaine reasons, in the 5. 6. and 7. verses.

The second is to the putting away of such finnes as did tend to the hurt of others, which likewise is propounded and pressed by the Apostle in the 8, 9, 10, and 11. verses.

To come then to this verse, where the Apostle begins his exhortation to the mortification of such finnes as were deare to the Colossians: that this verse hath reference and respect to precedent matter, it is cleare by the note of inference [*therefore*] *mortifie therefore*.

Now this inference is on this manner: the Apostle vers. 4. laid before the Colossians, that at the appearance of Christ to judgement, they beleeving in Christ should certainly appeare with him in glory: Hereupon (even on this promise of glory) hee doth inferre this exhortation: *Mortifie therefore your members, &c.* As if hee had said, You have the promise of glory, and you certainly looke to be glorified with Christ at his appearance: therefore you ought to labour, that (if it be possible) you may be found of him without spot of sinne: and to that end, you are to mortifie the body of sinne, and all the members of it; that is the dependance of this verse with that which goeth before.

In this verse considered by it selfe, we have laid before us:

First, a generall exhortation to mortifie sinne; which sinne is here set downe by a comparison under the name of a body, and the members of a body. And it is further amplified by the qualitie of those members, that they are terrene and earthly members. (*Mortifie therefore your members which are on the earth.*)

Then secondly, we have in this verse a particular enumeration of those members, and especially of those members of sinne, that were rise among the Colossians, when the Apostle wrote this Epistle; therefore hee saith, *Mortifie your members, &c.* and then comes to reckon them up; five in number: namely, *Fornication, Uncleannesse, Inordinate affection, evil Concupiscence, and Covetousnesse.* To which hee addes by way of disswasion, and to set out the ugliness of that sinne, that it is *Idolatry*.

Come wee to the words as they are laid downe by the Apostle, and first of the generall exhortation, *Mortifie therefore your members which are on the earth.*

The word [*Mortifie*] is metaphoricall, it is borrowed from *Chirurgians*, who when they must of necessitie cut off some part of a mans body (as in some diseases they must) then they use to lay plaisters to that part (that is ill infected, and to be cut off), to mortifie it, that is, to make it dead without sense and feeling, that it may be cut off with as little paine to the party as may be. From this manner of dealing is the word here borrowed and taken, and the meaning of the Apostle in saying, [*Mortifie*] is this, doe as Chirurgians doe in some cases, use all good meanes to benumme, to take away life from your earthly members to kill them, and to make them no more able to stirre than members mortified, yea, no more than a dead karcasse, for so doth the originall word signifie, [*Your members*] that is, your sinfull motions, lusts, and affections; for the corruption of nature is compared to a body, chap. 2. vers. 11. and the motions, lusts, and affections,

1. Part.

2. Part.

1

3

Interpretation
The word
hope of glory
in heaven
is reserved
for the
mortification
of sinne.

ry of his members goe together.

Reasons.

Use 1.

Comfort to all that have part in Christ, they shall certainly appear most glorious at the day of judgement.

Quest

Ans.

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Note.

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1. Part.

2. Part.

1

2

Interpretation.
Mortifying
hope of glory
in heaven
is reserved
for
of nature

affections that arise from them, are as members of that monstrous body, and therefore are called members by the Apostle. And againe, they are said to bee as members, because (being not mortified) they have force in all the members of the body to bring forth sinne, as the Apostle saith, Rom. chap. 7. ver. 5. *The motions of sinne have force in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.* Yea, those motions and lusts that issue out from naturall corruption, being not mortified, they run thorow the whole body and soule, and doe fill all the powers of the soule, and all the parts of the body with sinne, and therefore they are called members [*which are on the earth*] that is, earthly, which tend onely to earthly pleasures, and shall never be admitted into the Kingdome of Heaven, as it is, Revel. 21. 27.

Thus then vnderstand we this exhortation; as if the Apostle had said, doe you as Chirurgicalians use to doe, when they are of necessity to cut off some member of a mans body: use you all good meanes to benum, yea to kill, and to make dead your sinfull motions, lusts and affections, which are as members of that body of naturall corruption that is in you, and (being not mortified) have force in all the powers of your soules, and in all the members of your bodies to bring forth sin, and tend onely to earthly pleasures and profits, and shall never be admitted into the kingdome of heaven.

Now here, first observe we the inference, and dependance of this verse on the former: our Apostle having laid downe the certaine hope of glory with Christ, that no sooner shall Christ appeare, but all that beleeve in him shall appeare with him in glorie: wee are to marke that hee presently subjoyne to this, the dute of mortification; and saith, (*Mortifie therefore your members, which are on the earth, &c.*)

Hence wee may take up this point of doctrine: that hope of glory and mortification of sinne must ever goe together, the one of these must ever follow upon the other, they must be undivided companions: as many as have a certaine hope of glory in heaven, they must labour to quell and kill the motions of sin in themselves.

For why? that conclusion of speciall faith: I shall be saved, I certainly hope and looke for glory in heaven, is ever inferred on two other propositions.

One is in the Scripture, and that is generally, namely this: Hee that repents, and forsakes his finnes, and beleeves, and obeyes the Gospell unfeignedly, shall be saved.

The other is the perpetuall and constant testimony of conscience in such are called, namely this, I repent and forsake my finnes, and I beleeve and obey the Gospell unfeignedly; on these two is ever that conclusion brought in: therefore I shall bee saved, I doe assuredly looke for glorie in heaven. Therefore (doubtlesse) mortification of sinne, and hope of glorie in heaven must ever goe together, they are not to be sundered.

And let every one hereby examine himselfe, & consider that this which I deliver is a duty. Saint John, 1 Epist. 3. 3. delivers positively, and doth affirme it as a generall truth, that every man that hath his hope in him, purgeth himselfe. He saith in the verse before, we know that when he shall appeare, wee shall be like him; and then he brings in this generall proposition, *Every man that hath his hope in him, purgeth himselfe, even as he is pure*: that is, labours to purge out all corruption of sinne, that he may be in some measure pure as Christ is pure.

Let no man then flatter and deceive himselfe with a vaine hope of heavenly glory; for indeed it is but a vaine and deceiving hope that is severed from mortification of sinne. If thou undertake for the salute of thy soule, and say, thou hopest to bee saved, and yet allow thy selfe in the pursuit of sinfull pleasures and profits, even serving thine owne lust with delight, thou deceivest thy selfe, thou hast no true hope of a better life after this life is ended: yea, I

make

Doctr. 1.

Hope of glory and mortification of sinne must ever goe together.

The premises on which the conclusion of speciall faith is inferred.

1

2

Vse.

It is a vaine, deceiving hope of glory in heaven that is severed from mortification of sinne.

make no question of it, but I may justly appeale to thine owne conscience in this case, even that will tell thee, that thou wallowing in sinne, and pleasing thy selfe in a course of sinne, thou hast no certaine hope of comfort at the appearance of the Lord Iesus; thou that art a prophane person, an epicure, a drunkard, and an uncleane person, or the like, and hast no care to mortifie sinne: doubtlesse thine owne heart can tell thee, that thou art so farre from taking comfort in remembrance of Christ his coming to judgement, and wishing for his appearance, that thou art afraid of it, thou tremblest to thinke of it, thou thinkest if Christ should now come to judgement, hee should come to trouble thee before the time, as the devils spake, Matth. 28. 29. *What have we to doe with thee, art thou come to torment us before the time?* I appeale to thine owne heart, whether this be not the verie thought of thine heart? without question it is so in many. Well, let us remember it, that hope of glory in heaven, and mortification of sin ever goe together; and he that hath that hope in him purgeth himselfe; and so farre as we have prevailed in the mortification of sin, so farre wee may be assured of a better life: and how farre wee have therein prevailed may be easily knowne, because nothing is therein done, without great resistance of our corrupt and sinfull nature.

Let us then hereby examine our selves touching our hope of glory in Heaven.

The next thing offered unto us in this exhortation is, the dute it selfe here required by the Apostle, namely, mortification of sinne: that true beleivers labour by all good meanes to mortifie sinne, to becommen, and to make sinne dead in themselves.

Now for the better conceiving of this dute, I will first shew what mortification is: secondly, the meanes wee are to use for the mortifying of sinne: and thirdly, the continuance of that dute.

First therefore know, that mortification is a worke of grace, whereby wee doe not onely curbe and restraime the power and strength of our naturall corruption, and all the motions of it, but wee abate and weaken the strength of them, and by little and little doe kill and abolish the same. I say, a worke of grace, because it is not possible that nature should ever goe about to mortifie sinne; nature doth neither see, nor feelee corruption, but onely grace. Again, I say, whereby we doe not onely restraime the power of our naturall corruption, and all the motions of it (for restraint of sinne may be (in some part) in civill honest men, endued onely with civill honesty) but wee abate the strength of sinne, and by little and little doe kill and abolish it. And thus is mortification set forth to us in many places of the Scripture, it is called a mortifying of the old man, Rom. 6. 6. a crucifying of the flesh, with the lusts and affections thereof, Gal. 5. 24.

If any aske how we shall know when the strength of naturall corruption is more than restrained, even weakened and abated in us.

I answer, when it is not onely kept from breaking out into actuall sinne, but the lusts that issue out of it are a burthen to us, wee hate and detest them, and groane under the burthen of them, desiring to bee delivered from them, as the Apostle cried out, Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver mee from the body of this death?*

Now the meanes, whereby we may come thus to mortifie sin in us, are these:

The first is faith, applying to our selves Christ crucified; faith, whereby wee beleve that Christ was crucified for us, and we crucified with Christ, Gal. 2. 19. where this faith is, there is the power of Christ his death, even that power that sustained Christ on the crosse, to beare the guilt and punishment of our sinnes, and that power is also effectuall to abolish the corruption of sin in all his members, and it is indeed the power of his spirit, Rom. 8. 13.

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Many in
the world
who think
that they
are saved
by their
works

Doct. 2.

True beleivers
must labour by
all good meanes
to mortifie sin
in themselves.

What mortifi-
cation of sin is.

Note. We
must not
think that
we are
saved by
our works

Quest

Answer.

Meanes that
are to be used
to mortifie sin.

1

The second meanes is a serious application of the word of God, and especially of the commandements, and threatnings of God to our severall lusts and affections: hence is the Word called the sword of the Spirit. Ephes. 6. 17.

2

The third meanes is a carefull avoiding of all occasions and meanes that may stirre up our corruption, and the sinfull motions and lusts of our hearts. Job faith, Job 31. 1. *He made a covenant with his eyes, &c.*

The continu-
ance of morti-
fication of sin.

Now lastly, we must know that this dutie doth lie on us till death, because the corruption of nature shall not be utterly vanquished, and abolished in any till death.

Thus then conceive wee this dutie, wee are by faith (applying to our selves Christ crucified) and by serious application of the commandements and threatnings of God to our severall lusts and affections, and by carefull avoidance of all occasions and meanes (that may stirre up our corruption, and the sinfull motions and lusts of our hearts) to labour not onely to bridle our naturall corruption and weaknesse, but to abate it; and this must be a continued action: we are to doe it so long as breath is in our bodies.

Use 1.
Many in the
world discov-
ered to be un-
mortified per-
sons.

Now this being so, for the use of it: First, it may unmaske and discover many in the world, (who thinke highly of themselves) to be unmortified persons. Are there not many who shroud themselves under the covert of harmlesse honesty? they deale truly, they doe no body harme, they abstaine from all outrageous behaviour (which I speake not against) but yet if they looke into themselves, they shall finde they cherish in their hearts naughty affections, and damnable lusts of anger, or pride, selfe-love, selfe-conceit, covetousnesse, or the like; and these they never labour to suppress and extinguish; no, they nourish these with liking, and thinke themselves in very good case, in respect of their civill behaviour. Well, let such persons know that they are unmortified; yea, take this with thee whosoever thou art, that doest blesse thy selfe in thy civill behaviour, and thinke on it. Thy civill carriage without mortification of thy sinfull lusts and affections, is no better in Gods sight than a glittering abomination. The like civill life was found in the very Heathen, and it may be in one that never shall be saved; therefore thinke on it.

Use 2.
We are to pra-
ctice the duty
of mortifica-
tion.

Note.

And for further use of this, let us all be stirred up to the practice of mortification; let us labour not onely to bridle our corruption, that it breake not out, but to kill and to crucifie it; let us never rest till wee finde the first motions of it a burthen to us, and that wee groane under that burthen, desiring to bee delivered: yea, let such as have made some good proceeding in this duty, still goe on, and more and more mortifie the flesh, with the lusts and affections of it; for even the best have hidden and unknowne corruptions in them, as David said, Psal. 19. 22. and they must be found out and mortified. And because wee faile in this dutie, the Lord himselfe sometimes takes the worke in hand, and hee will crucifie our corruption by his chastisements; yea (if wee observe it) wee shall finde that the Lord sometimes will crosse us even in good courses, for our secret corruption not mortified; as hee overthrew the men of Israel, twice going to battell in a just cause, and by the mouth of the Lord himselfe, Iudg. 10. for their secret sinne, because they were not so humbled as they ought to have beene; thus will the Lord deale with all that belong unto him. Let us therefore (even as many as have begun to mortifie sinne) still goe on in that dutie, labour we to finde out our lusts, yea the hidden corruptions of our hearts, and by a true application of Christ crucified to thine owne heart, by laying to it the commandements and threatnings of the Word, and by carefull avoidance of all occasions and meanes that may stirre up thy corruption, labour to kill and crucifie sinne; and to this purpose remember the words of the Apostle, Rom. 8. 13. *If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye mortifie the deeds of the body by the spirit, ye shall live: if we please our selves in any corruption of the flesh, be it but an inward*

inward lust, and live in it with pleasure, we shall die: but if we mortifie it we shall live. Mortification of sin is an infallible signe that we have the spirit of life, and that we live the life of grace in this world, & shall live the life of glory hereafter.

We are further to observe how the Apostle here sets out the object of mortification, namely sinne, and the sinfull motions of the heart. He saith not in plaine termes, mortifie your sinfull motions, lusts and affections, but (*mortifie your members*) he calls their sinfull motions (lusts and affections) their members; because (indeed) they are not onely as members of that soule body of our naturall corruption, but because (being not mortified) they have force to bring forth sin in all the members of our bodies, and are to us as our members.

Hence wee may raise two conclusions. The first is this, that sinfull motions, lusts and affections not mortified, cleave as neere to us as the members of our bodies, and are as deare and neare to us as any of our members. Hence it is that our Saviour bids us, Matth. 5. 29. *plucke out our right eye*, &c. not meaning that wee should doe violence to our owne bodies, but that wee should cut off, and cast from us the dearest things wee have, if they cause us to offend: and it may be also understood of that corruption and concupiscence that hath force in the eye and hand, which is therefore called by the name of the eye and hand, because it is as deare and tender unto us as our eye or hand. Job 20. 12, 13. *Zophar* sets out this notably: he saith, that *wickednesse is sweet in the mouth of the wicked, he hides it under his tongue, he favours it, and will not forsake it, but keeps it close in his mouth*.

The reason of this is plaine, namely: this originall sinne and corruption hath taken hold of, and corrupted our very nature, and the powers & faculties of our soules; so as we may truly say, that the nature, and the powers, and faculties of the soule of man are corrupted; nature, and the powers of nature, and corruption cannot be severed; and therefore it is that the motions, lusts and affections that come from thence being not mortified, are as neare and deare unto us, as the very powers of our soules, or the parts and members of our bodies.

First therefore this may teach us how we may come to know when our corrupt lusts and desires are mortified, namely, when they are not deare unto us, we make not much of them, and they are not to us as the members of our bodies; but as burthens: though they be in us and arise in our hearts, yet wee like them not, but even hate and loath them: for indeed they may be in us, yea they may at some time bee violent in us, and overcarry us to sinne, and yet bee in a measure mortified. It was *Peter* case, Galat. chap. 2. verf. 12. hee was overcarried with his feare to withdraw himselfe from the Gentiles, yet was *Peter* a man regenerate and mortified, and that sinne of his was a sinne of infirmity: for that indeed is a sinne of infirmity, when a man regenerate, carrying in his heart a purpose not to sinne, is notwithstanding overcarried by some great temptation, or violence of affection to sinne. Every wicked and prophane man will say, he sinnes of infirmity: as the filthy fornicator, the beastly drunkard, the common swearer, and the like; but it is not so, these persons sinne with all their hearts, and their sinne comes not from lust and affection, onely at some time violent: but ever ruling and reigning in them, and so they sinne of purpose, not of infirmity: (but that by the way) Let it be remembered, that the lusts and motions of sinne that are in us, and doe sometimes overcarry us to sinne, are (for all that) in a measure mortified, when they are not deare unto us, but wee hate and detest them, and are weary of them, and strive against them. And this I speake for the comfort of such as labour and groane under the burthen of their owne corruptions; yea and sometimes are driven (in respect of them) to make question of their state, whether they be the children of God or no; as sometimes this is their complaint, I desire in my heart to obey God, and to keepe faith and a good conscience in all things, but I finde that my nature is so wicked, and so rebellious, that

Doe. 3.

Sinfull lusts, motions, and affections not mortified, are as deare unto us as the members of our bodies.

Reason.

Vse t.

How we may know when our corrupt lusts and desires are mortified.

Nota.

When a sin of infirmity is.

that I sometimes doubt I am not the childe of God: well, examine thy selfe by this, doest thou (slaying thy rebellion) hate thy lust? doest thou every day (humbling thy selfe before God) strive against it, and being overcarried by it with some sinne; doest thou recover thy selfe by new repentance? if thou dost with good conscience say, thou doest this, thou needest not to feare it, thou art a childe of God: for marke what the Apostle saith, Gal. chap. 5. ver. 26. *walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh*: it is there made a principle of Gods childe not to be altogether void of the lusts of the flesh, but not to fulfill them, that is, not to accomplish them with love, with pleasure, and with full consent of will. If thou hate and detest the lusts that are in thee, if thou resist them and strive against them (if being sometimes overcarried by them) thou recover thy selfe by new and speedy repentance, certainly (remember it to thy comfort) they shall never be laid to thy charge to thy condemnation.

It is a meere fancy that a man may when he will mortifie the known corruption of his owne heart.

Againe, is it so that our sinfull motions, lusts and affections, not mortified, are as deare unto us as the members of our owne bodies? then let no man flatter to himselfe that he may at his owne time and pleasure mortifie and kill any known corruption of his owne heart. It is a conceit running to the mindes of many (helped forward by strong delusion of Satan) that they may subdue and overcome their known finnes and corruptions when they will, and they may at their pleasure overcome their pride, their lust, their covetousnesse, and the like. Alas they are deceived, they shall finde it will become hard to doe, as if they were to lay violent hands on their owne bodies, and cut off a leg, or an arme: therefore let not any of our hearts be possessed with such deceiving thoughts, Jerem. 13. 23. *Can the blacke Moore change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? then may they also doe good, that are accustomed to the evil*. The Prophet there shewes how hard a thing it is to breake off but a custom of sinne, even as hard as to make a blacke Moore white, a thing in nature impossible. Now if custome (which is but a second nature) bee so hard to be broken off, what may wee deeme nature it selfe to be? how hard a thing is it to abolish that corruption that is bred and borne with us, and is as deare unto us as any member of our bodies? Let no man then imagine that hee can at his owne pleasure shake from him his old sweet familiar sin, & offer violence to his owne nature, and so pleasing himselfe in that fond and windy conceit, neglect the timely and carefull using of the meanes of mortification. Let us (so soone as ever wee spie any corruption, any sinfull lust or motion in our hearts) use the meanes to kill the same, let us not suffer it there to harbour and rest, in hope hereafter to deale with it, and overcome it: wee shall finde worke enough at the first, and the longer wee suffer it, the stronger and the more hard it will be to overmaster. Yea, let us know it is even a judgement of God upon us, if wee suffer any known corruption in our hearts, and use not the meanes to mortifie it: for as there is no greater signe of Gods wrath, than when hee suffers us to goe on and thrive in sinne: so certainly it is his judgement upon us, when wee suffer a known sinne in our selves, and use not the meanes to mortifie and to overcome it. Let us therefore bee stirred up to a timely and carefull using of the meanes of mortification, so soone as ever wee spie any sinne in our selves.

The second conclusion may bee thus gathered: In that the Apostle saith (*Identifie your members, &c.*) Meaning the sinfull motions, lusts and affections that are as the members of that monstrous body of sinne, and have force in our members.

Hence we may easily conclude thus much: that it is the inward lust & corruption of the heart that doth infect all the members of the body with sin: it is that which doth fill the eye with pride and with adultery, so as the very looke of the eye is defiled, & the eye is full of adultery, 2 Pet. 2. 14. It is that which defileth the

Doctr. 4.
It is the inward lust and corruption of the heart that

the hand, and makes it lift up to shed blood, and by it the foote is defiled, and hastneth to mischief: by it the tongue is set on fire to blaspheme, to rail, to lye: and howsoever the Apostle saith, *Iam. 3. 6. That the wicked tongue is set on fire of bell,* meaning by the divell: yet it makes not against this I now deliver, because the divell could not use the tongue of man, or any member of his body, as an instrument of sin, were it not for the corruption that is within man himselfe: the divell stirres up that, and sends that abroad into all the parts and members of the body. *Math. 15. 18.* Our Saviour teacheth plainly, that all defilement of man comes from within, even from the heart, from the lust and corruption of the heart, that is the thing that doth defile the whole man.

Now this being so, that from the lust and corruption of the heart, comes the infection and defilement of all the parts and members of the body with sinne: it behooves every one of us to follow the counsell of *Salomon*, *Prov. chap. 4. verse 23. To keepe our hearts with all diligence:* and in the first place, to looke to the purging of our hearts from sinfull motions, lusts, and affections. Wouldest thou mortifie the lust, or pride that is in thine eye? thou must then labour to mortifie the lust that is in thy heart, which doth fill thine eye with lust. It is preposterous and in vaine to goe about to mortifie the sinne of thine hand, thy feete, &c. so long as thine heart is full of unmortified motions and lusts: to instance in one particular, It is to no purpose (in respect of true mortification) to keepe backe thine hand from doing wrong to others, either by violence or fraude, if thou have within thee the heart of *Ahab*, even a secret liking of the goods of thy neighbour, tickling, and delighting thine heart, and causing thee to wish, Oh would such a house, or such a field were mine: for that roots of covetousnesse will at one time or other send forth bitter fruits. Looke therefore in the first place, to the mortification of the lust, and corruption of thine heart: if thou labour to mortifie the members of thy body, and not the members of that body of corruption that are in thee, which fill thine eyes, thy hands, thy tongue, and all the members of thy body with sinne: the Lord may deale with thee proportionably, and justly fasten his judgement upon thine heart, and give thee up to hardnesse and unfeelingnesse of sinne: for it is just with the Lord wherein we sinne, therein to punish us.

One thing yet remaines in this generall exhortation to bee considered, namely the qualitie of the members of sinnes, that they are earthly. We are to marke that the Apostle saith not, which are hellish or divellish, as he might, but which are earthly, hee thought it sufficient to set out the ugliness of sinnefull motions, lusts, and affections, to say they are earthly.

And indeed, it is enough to make the sinfull motions of our hearts ugly, and hatefull in the sight of God, and of good men: yea, in our owne eyes, if wee be children of God, when we finde they tend only to earthly pleasures: it is enough to make us hate and detest them, and desire to be freed from them. Our Apostle could not speake of such motions in other men but with teares in his eyes: *Phil. 3. 19. They minde earthly things:* the motions of their mindes are earthly, and shall we then speake and thinke of them in our selves with delight? If wee doe, we are farre from the affection of the Apostle.

And indeed, when Gods children feelee their hearts moved towards fornication, uncleannesse, or the like, they thinke with themselves, these are but earthly and sensuall pleasures: and even in that respect they labour to quell and kill such motions, and suffer them not to rest in their bosomes, because they are grosse and earthly, they cannot away with them.

Come we to the particular enumeration of the members of sinne, which the Apostle exhorted the *Colossians* to mortifie, in the words following: namely, *Fornication, uncleannesse, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousnesse.* He reckons up five particular sinnes that are to bee mortified. the foure

infecteth all the members of the body with sinne.

Note.

Use

We are chiefly to purge our hearts, and keepe them with all diligence.

Doff. 5.

Sinful motions of the heart are ugly and hateful enough in that they are earthly.

Use

If we be Gods children wee cannot away with the sinfull motions of our hearts, because they are grosse and earthly.

first are finnes against the seventh Commandement: *Fornication, Vncleanness, Inordinate affection, evill Concupiscence.* And the fifth is a sin against the eighth Commandement, *Covetousnesse.*

Before wee come to speake of these finnes, as they are laid downe in order, observe the Apostles order, his manner of proceeding, from his generall exhortation to the mortification of sinne. Hee comes downe to particulars, hee thought it not sufficient to say, *mortifie sinne*, but hee descendeth to exhort to the mortification of such finnes, as hee knew were found among the Colossians, (as indeed, *Fornication* was a sinne common among the Gentiles) and the Apostle doth bend his speech much against it in his other Epistles: yea wee shall finde, he insisteth more largely, in condemning that sinne, than commonly he doth, in any other sinne.

Doctr. 6.
Preachers of
the word are
to speake a-
gainst particu-
lar finnes.

Hence we are taught thus much: that sinne is not onely to bee spoken against in generall, but also in particular. Ministers and Preachers of the Word are to bend their speech against particular finnes, even finnes knowne to bee amongst them, to whom they speake: and not onely to say, take heede of sinne, or flee from sinne, but to point out particular knowne finnes that are found in them to whom they speake. Wee shall finde it to have bene the practise of the Prophets and Teachers, from time to time: 2 Sam. 12. 7. *Nathan* comes to *David*, and tells him, *He was the man*: yea, hee went further with him, and laid before him his particular sinne, and the greatnesse of it, bringing to his minde Gods mercie in his advancement, his contempt of Gods goodnesse, and his close and cunning dealing in committing his sinne, from that verse to the 13. Thus (Act. 2. 23) the Apostle *Peter* tells the Jewes of their particular sinne, *That they had crucified Iesus of Nazareth*: and to make them see the ugliness of their sinne, he goes on, and sets before them the manner of Christ his apprehension, that they had taken him by the hands of wicked men (preordained as vessels of wrath to that purpose) and that they had crucified *Iesus* indeed, but that *Iesus*, whom God had raised up from the dead, and by his right hand exalted to the highest heavens, and made both Lord and Christ. It were easie to shew this by many other examples, that the Preachers of the Word, are not onely to deale against sinne in generall, but to descend to particulars, even to finnes knowne to bee in them to whom they speake.

The reason is plaine, they are to labour to make men so to see sinne, that they may be humbled, and repent of it, and that will never bee effected by speaking against sinne in generall: every man will bee ready to put off that which is spoken in generall from himselfe to others, and therefore there must bee a descending to particular finnes knowne to bee in them, to whom the Word is preached.

First therefore, this gives warrant to the Ministers of the Word, to speake against particular knowne finnes: yea it lies upon us that are Ministers as a ducie. We are not to deale with sinne, as private men use to speake of State-matters in generall termes, warily, and a farre off, lest they bee intangled in their talke, but wee are to strike at sinne in particular: yea, wee are to discover the peculiar ugliness, and deformitie of it, by the condition of the sinner, by the manner of doing it, and by circumstances of time, and place. And if sinne bee so set before such as are guiltie, it will either by grace make their hearts bleed for sorrow, as theirs did, Acts 2. 37. or by corruption burst for anger, as theirs did, Acts 7. 54.

Againe, is it so that the Preachers of the Word are to deale against sinne not onely in generall, but in particular? then let no man thinke himselfe hardly dealt withall, if his particular knowne sinne, bee set before him in the preaching of the Word. It is commonly said, when a man reproves a notorious sinne in any man, that hee speakes against that man: as if a man and his sinne were all one:

Use. 1.
Preachers of
the Word have
warrant to
speake against
particular finnes.

Use 2.
Men are not to
thinke them-
selves hardly
dealt withall.

one: whereas indeed the Preacher speaks not against the person, but against the sinne of the person: and if a man be somewhat vehement in speaking against a particular knowne sinne, according to the nature and qualitie of it, then hee shall be charged with too much rigour, and he is too harsh and peremptory, and that his words are not to be borne. Thus wee manifest and belch out the corruption of our owne hearts: yea, even this is a particular sinne too common amongst many: we delight in such teachers, as come not neere us, and so such as never touch our particular finnes: if a man fill our heads with novelties and strange conceits, hee is the onely teacher for many of us; as for him that comes home to our hearts, and sets our particular and personall finnes before us, wee cannot away with him, wee like not him but from the teeth outward. Let us take knowledge of this to be the particular sinne of many of us, and let us bee humbled for it; otherwise wee may justly looke for the curse of God on our hearing, that as we delight in plausible novelties, so the Lord in his judgement may suffer our heads to be filled with them, and keepe our hearts empty of all saving comfort; yea, even hide from us the sweetnesse and comforts of his word.

Come we now to speake of the finnes heere reckoned up by the Apostle that are to be mortified, and first of these foure: *Fornication, uncleannesse, Inordinate affection, and ill Concupiscence*: which are finnes under one head, and all forbidden in the seventh Commandement: and of these I will not speake at large (for every one of them might take up a large discourse) but onely so much as is for the purpose of the present text, which drives at the mortification of these finnes.

I will therefore first shew what these finnes are severally, and the greatness of them.

And secondly, the meanes that are to be used for the mortification of them, with application of the same.

And after that, come to some generall doctrine that may be gathered from these words.

First therefore know we that (*Fornication*) is an outward breach of the seventh Commandement, and it is the carnall copulation of two single or unmarried persons, even filthinesse committed by two persons unmarried, and howsoever, this is not so great a sinne as adultery, which is filthinesse committed betweene married persons, or at least one of them being married: yea it is a most grievous sinne: 1 Corinth. chap. 6. from verse 15. to the end, our Apostle doth there paint out the greatness of it in lively colours, as that is *the members of Christ, and makes them the members of an harlot*, it defileth the body in more speciall manner than other finnes: whence it is, that men and women are counted dishonest, if not onely, yet chiefly for the sinne of fornication, it defileth the Temple of the holy Ghost, and it profaneth the bodies of men and women (bought with a great price, even the precious blood of Christ) to most base and vile uses: adde to these the fearefull effects and fruits of this sinne, which may also set out the greatness of it: it brings forth a diseased body, a peevish state, and an ill name: yea, which is worst of all, it makes both body and soule liable to the curse of God: 1 Corinth. 6. verse 16. yea, not onely the body and soule of one, but of two are so; even two at one time by this sinne are wrapped within compass of Gods curse: and therefore doubtles fornication is a grievous sinne.

Now the second sinne heere named is (*uncleannesse*) This sinne also is an outward breach of the seventh Commandement, and by it wee are to understand every actual defilement of bodies against nature, such as of incest, with such as are within degrees forbidden, and laid forth, Levit. 18. from verse 6. to the 13. and of other defilements which are more against nature, as that which is committed with another kinde, as with brute beasts, expressly forbidden,

when their particular knowne finnes are discovered by the preaching of the word

1
What fornication is.

The greatness of that sinne.

2
What uncleannesse is.

The greatnes
of that sinne.

3
What inordi-
nate affection
is.

The greatnes
of this sinne.

4
What evil con-
cupiscence is.

The greatnes
of this sinne.

Meanes that
serve for the
mortification
of the forena-
med finnes are
four.

Note.

Levit. 18.23. or that which is committed with that sexe, which is not for that naturall use, spoken of, Romans 1.26.27. and was the sinne of Sodomie: or that which is most unnaturall, and was in part the sinne of Onan, Genes. 38.9. Now these defilements of the body are most foule and grievous finnes, in that they are not onely against the Law of God, but against the very light of nature, and bee commonly punishments of some other horrible finnes, and ever follow a very prophane and dead heart. Rom. 1.24. the Apostle saith, *When the heathen turned the glory of the incorruptible God, to the similitude of the image of a corruptible man, &c. God gave them up to their hearts lusts: unto uncleannesse, &c. therefore all kinde of uncleannesse is a horrible sinne.*

The third sinne of the same kinde here mentioned is the (*inordinatus affectus*) which is an inward breach of the seventh Commandement. In the originall it is but one word *inordinatus*, and heereby wee are to understand the passion of lust, which boyleth and burneth within, provoking the body and minde to uncleannesse, and this is that which the Apostle calls burning: 1 Cor. 7.9. *It is better to marry than to burne*, that is, to have within, a continuall fervencie of lust, boyling and stirring to uncleannesse and fornication: and herein may appear the greatnesse of this sinne, in that it is a burning lust and affection: for being so, it not onely hindreth good motions of the heart, but (as fire) doth consume all moysture of grace: yea, where there is an heart enflamed, and burning with the passion of fervent lust, that flame doth distract the minde, discompoise the body, and disorder all holy actions. It is worth marking that Peter saith, 2 Pet. 2.14. they that have adulterous eyes (which are the messengers of that passion of lust) *they cannot cease to sinne*: therefore (without question) this inordinate affection, this passion of lust is a grievous sinne.

Now the last sinne of this kinde expressed, is (*evil concupiscence*) which is also an inward breach of the seventh Commandement: and first the Apostle calls it (*evil*) to distinguish it both from the desire of nature (of things serving for the necessitie of nature, as meate and drinke) which in it selfe is neither good nor ill, and also from the lust of the Spirit, spoken of Galat. 5.17. which is holy and good, and this *evil* concupiscence here spoken of, is the inward motion of the heart to uncleannesse, with consent of will, it is the purpose and desire of the heart to any filthie act of adultery, called by our Saviour the adultery of the heart: Matth. 5.28. *He that looketh on a woman to lust after her, that is, with a will and desire to her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* Now this is the mother and roote of that burning lust, and they differ onely in degree one from another: this desire to any filthie act of adultery is the first degree of lust, and that passion of lust is a further degree, giving no rest, but ever stirring to the committing of the filthie act of adultery: and therefore this desire of the heart to any filthie act of adultery, being the mother of that fervent and boyling lust, and the grandmother of uncleannesse, must needs bee a great and a grievous sinne.

Having thus seene these finnes, what they are, and the greatnesse of them, consider we in the next place, the speciall meanes that serve for the mortifying of them, which are chiefly these.

First, the feare of God, that wee feare God in his word and commandement that forbids these finnes: that feare will cleanse both the heart and body. Marriage indeed is a meanes to avoide the act of filthinesse, but it will not kill lust if this feare of God be wanting: this hath the promise, Eccles. 7.28. *I finde more bitter than death, the woman whose heart is as snares and snares, and her hands as bands: he that regardeth before God, shall be delivered from her, but the sinner shall be taken by her.*

The second meanes is a true delight in the Word of God, and his holy ordinances. Every man will have his delight: if wee have not spirituall delight, certainly,

certainly, our hearts will bee taken up with fleshly and carnall delights, and therefore true delight in the word and ordinances of God is a speciall meanes to keep out lust. *Ps. 102. 10. Salvation saith, when wisdom shall be in thine heart, and knowledge shall quicken thy soule, then verily it shall deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger that flattereth with her words.*

The third meanes is earnest prayer to God, that hee would purifie and purge our hearts: for hee alone it is that must purgeth us from filthy lusts: and as one saith well, it is not possible that either that Christian (who is diligent in prayer) should be weake in grace to overcome sin, or that grace should abound where there is neglect of prayer.

The fourth and last meanes is avoidance of all things that stir up and nourish these lusts in our hearts: for take away food from the bodie, and it will languish and pine away, so take away those things that stir up and nourish lust; and lust will be weakened and decay in us: and those are, idleness, excess in diet, vanity, and excess in trimming the bodie with apparell, wanton speeches and gestures, bad company and the like.

If wee now examine our selves by these meanes spoken of, it is to bee feared wee shall finde that many of us are unmortified in respect of these finnes, yea, even such as will challenge to themselves that they are free from the filthie use of adultery. And not so stand on it, whether they feare the Lord, or delight in his word, or use prayer against these lusts, or no, doe not make persons shew themselves unmortified in regard of these finnes, in their light and wanton apparell, in their newfangled and garish attire?

They will say, doe you know my heart whether I be mortified or no?

I answer thee, I take not on mee to know thine heart, but by the fruits: can any thinke thee mortified to sinne within in thine heart, when thou livest to all vanities and excess without in thy body? must we iudge thee reformed in soule, who art unreformed in body; and that thou art mortified to these finnes, and yet regardest not the meanes of mortification? wee have no warrant so to thinke, and thou deceivest thy selfe, if thou thinke, thou art mortified to these sins.

Now then that every one may be stirred up carefully to use the meanes that serve for the mortification of these finnes.

Let us consider how farre they provoke the Lord to wrath. Wee shall finde they provoke him not onely to execute his vengeance on the parties themselves, that are guilty of them, giving them up in their soules to prophanesse, and plaguing them in their bodies, with foule and filthy diseases: but they provoke the Lord to execute his wrath on the place, and land where they live, *Levit. 18. 25. the Lord saith, the land is defiled by them, and shall vomit out her inhabitants,* the words are of great vehemencie: and therefore our feare should be great, that wee provoke not the Lord to such vengeance: we ought to be stirred up to a carefull practise of the meanes serving for the mortifying of these finnes.

Come wee to the third thing I propounded to stand upon (namely) some generall doctrine, that may be gathered from these words, and first in that the lust of fornication is to be mortified.

Wee may gather, that fornication is not a thing indifferent, or a matter of small moment, and lightly to be regarded; but it is a sinne, it is a breach of Gods Law, and that a great and fearfull breach of it. This point I have sufficiently made manifest, onely remember that the Apostle in the 1. Corinth. 6. doth much insist on that, and condemnes it by many arguments, and hee calls it directly sinne, *verse 18. Flee fornication, every sinne that a man doeth is without the bodie, but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own bodie.*

Now this wee are to hold for truth, against whatsoever can be said to the contrary, for indeede there is something said and objected by some to the contrary,

Reprooffe of
such as use not
these meanes.

Objection.
Answer.

A motive to
stirre us up to
use the meanes
before spoken
of.

Doctrine 7.
Fornication is
not a thing in-
different or of
small moment.

Object. 1

trarie even against the plaine evidence of the word, either in way of extenuation of this sinne, or to prove it to bee a thing indifferent.

As first it is objected, that the Lord had *Hosea* the Prophet, *Hos. 1. 2.* *To take to him a wife of fornication*, and therefore (say some) fornication is not simply evill, and in itselfe sinne, for if *so* (say they) then did the Lord command the Prophet to sinne.

Answer. 1

First, that can never bee proved to bee a historie, and a narration of a thing done, but a Prophetically vision.

2

Again, if wee grant it was a thing done, yet will it not follow thence, that the Lord commanded the Prophet to sinne, or that the Prophet sinned in so doing, because the Lord hath power to dispence with his Law, and may give a speciall command for the doing of that which hee hath generally forbidden in his law; and the Prophet being commanded might lawfully doe it, and not sinne, yea, if he had not done it (being commanded of the Lord) hee had sinned, as *Abraham* had sinned if he had not gon about to kill his son *Isaac*, being so commanded by the Lord, *Gen. 22.* and the *Israelites* had sinned, if they had not spoiled the *Egyptians* as they were commanded of the Lord *Exo. 11. 2.* though the fact of *Abraham* without the speciall commandment of the Lord, had beene murder, and the fact of the *Israelites* had beene theft: therefore it makes nothing for the defence of fornication to prove it no sinne, because the Prophet had a speciall commandment to take unto him a wife of fornications.

Objection.

It is further objected, that fornication is reckoned up by the Apostles among things indifferent, *Acts. 15. 29.* the Apostles decreed that the Gentiles should abstaine from things offered to Idols, and that that is strangled, which are things indifferent, and to these they ioyned fornication: therefore say some, fornication is a thing indifferent.

Answer

To this I answer, it followes not that fornication is a thing indifferent, because it is ioyned with things indifferent in the decrees of the Apostles, for their purpose was not in that decreeto shew what things were indifferent, or what unlawfull, but what things were most offensive, and what things did chiefly trouble the Churches, and offend the weake Jewes: and those were eating of bloud, and things strangled, and the fornication of the Gentiles. The Apostles afterward in their writings shew plainly their iudgement of those things, and wee finde they declare it lawfull to eat bloud and things strangled, but they simply condemne fornication: therefore notwithstanding this, that fornication is reckoned up with things indifferent, it remaines that fornication is in it selfe a sinne, yea a grievous sinne.

The wickednes
of the papists
in tolerating
whoredome.

Therefore wickedly deale the papists who tolerate and permit open whoredome, the Pope alloweth the curtesans in Rome and other places a rent to professe filthinesse, yea, the papists sticke not to say, and publish in their writings, that the stewes are for the common-wealth, and that in some persons fornication is better than marriage, which indeed is a doctrine of devils, and fetched from the pit of hell: what can bee more contradictory to the Spirit of God, and to the plaine evidence of the Scripture?

Objection.

Oh but say they, the stewes are tolerated for the avoyding of greater evils, as adultery, incest and the like.

Answer.

I answer them, cursed bee that remedie of sinne, that is sinne it selfe, as *Augustine* saith. God will not have such a gaine to bee recompenced with such a losse, and the Apostle saith, *Rom. 3. 8.* *Some say, let us doe ill, that good may come thereof*, but marke what followes: *their damnation is iust*, evill must not bee done, that good may come of it. Wee may see by this the shamelesse impudency of the Papists what wickednesse will not they defend, that so boldly plead for confessed filthinesse?

But (to come to our selves) is it so that fornication is simply evill, and a grievous

vous sinne? then farre be it from every one of us to extenuate the matter, and to account of fornication but as a trifle, and (as the world speaks) but a trick of youth. Shall we esteeme that a trifle, and a trick, that is repugnant to the eternall wisdom and iustice of God revealed in his holy word, that shewes out of the kingdome of God, and opens hell mouth upon us, and makes us subject to the curse of God, to be everlastingly tormented in body and soule in the fire of hell? farre be it from every one of us, and certainly it is farre from all that have any dramme of grace, and any conscience, or true feeling in them. They that esteeme fornication a small matter, and but a trick of youth, the devill hath dild their hearts, and that is come on them the Prophet speaks of, *Hos. 4. 11. Whoredome, and wine, and new wine hath taken away their heart*, even their judgement and understanding, their conscience and feeling; and therefore labour thou to esteeme of fornication as it ought to bee esteemed, even as a foule sinne, and fearfull breach of Gods law, and as a sinne that of it self brings forth fearfull effects in this life, and in the life to come destruction of body and soule; and so account of the threatnings of God against it, as of certaine execution. Feare the plagues and iudgements denounced against it, as presently to come, on the committing of it: for if thou suffer Satan so farre to prevaile with thee, as to account fornication but a trifle; certainly then (as it is, *Prov. 7. 12.*) thou wilt straight waies follow the harlot, *as an Oxe that goeth to the slaughter, and as a foole to the stocks for correction*; not discerning whither thou goest, or what danger thou art like to fall into: therefore account of fornication as it is, and as it ought to be accounted of, and learne to feare and avoid it.

In the next place observe we, that the Apostle doth not onely exhort to the mortification of lust, breaking out into the act of fornication or uncleannesse, but to the mortifying also of the passion of lust, of inward burning, and of evill concupiscence, to the mortifying of the purpose and desire of the heart to any filthy act of lust.

Hence wee may take up this point: that wee are not onely to strive against the act of fornication or uncleannesse, but wee must also endeavour to subdue and overcome the inward lust of our hearts; we must labour to stocke up the roote, and to dry up the fountaine of all filthinesse, and evill concupiscence, *1 Thes. 4. 3. 4. 5.* the Apostle teacheth that our sanctification (according to the will of God) standeth not onely in abstaining from the outward act of fornication, but that every one of us know how to possesse his vessell in holinesse and honour, and not in the lust of concupiscence: that is, not in the outward burning lust, stirring up to filthinesse comming from evill concupiscence: as if hee had said, that is indeed true sanctification agreeable to the will of God, and pleasing to God, that is, throughout, outwardly in the body, keeping that pure and undefiled; and inwardly in the heart, rooting out from thence the lust of concupiscence: and therefore wee must not onely strive against the outward act of filthinesse, but labour to plucke up the roote, and to drie up the fountaine of it.

And there is reason for it; for otherwise we shall labour but in vaine, though we cut off the branches of lust, yet the root it selfe being still left in our hearts, certainly they will spring and grow againe; therefore, in reason, wee are not onely to abstaine from the act of filthinesse, but to mortifie the inward lusts of our hearts.

And herein many are much wanting. If wee duly examine our selves in this behalfe, I am afraid many of our owne hearts will witnesse against us, and condemn us: doe not many, onely for their profit, or credits sake, either to avoid the danger of the law of man, or shame of the world, or the like, abstaine from the act of fornication, and uncleannesse, and yet never strive against the inordinate affection, and evill concupiscence which they know to abound

It ought to be farre from us to account fornication but a trifling matter.

Doct. 8.
We must not onely strive against the act of fornication, but we must also labour to subdue the inward lust of our hearts.

Reason.

V. 8.
Reprobo of such as are wanting in this dutie.

which is the
nature of
man
which is the
nature of
man

in their hearts: yea their owne hearts can tell them they are filthy impure and filthy lusts within, and yet they thinke all is well, so long as they are free from outward filthinesse; yea, it may be some there be, who are unfit (by reason of age, or debility of body) for the practice of fornication, who yet delight in seeing others wanton, and their hearts are tickled, and leap for joy within them, when they see others runne madding after that filth, in all wanton and uncleanly gestures; and they thinke that it is a matter of nothing, and they are in no danger at all in that respect. I feare mee that which I now speake fits neare many persons, and they cannot avoid the dint of it. I appeale to their owne consciences, whether it be not so with many: and let such persons (whose hearts are hertin guilty) know, that they are farre from true mortification, and consequently (as yet) farre from hope of salvation. Therefore thinke on it, whoeuer thou art, that thinkest all is well, if thou abstaine from the act of fornication, or be unfit for the practice of it, and yet dost harbour in thine heart known filthy lusts; and wilt all remember, that thy inward lust and concupiscence is a breach of the Commandement of God, and that his eye doth see thy most secret filthinesse, and will one day bring it to judgement, Eccle. 11: 14. The eyes of his glory are so pure, as he will not allow the least filthy conceit in thine heart; and therefore thinke it not sufficient to abstaine from the outward act of filthinesse, but labour thou to mortifie, to kill and to crucifie the inward lust of thine heart; yea never resting meane to that purpose, till thine owne conscience beare thee witness, thou hast in some good measure subdued and overcome the same.

Doctr. 6.
So great is the corruption of nature, that without Gods grace we are prone to vile, monstrous, and ugly finnes.

which is the
nature of
man
which is the
nature of
man

One other generall doctrine may be gathered from these words: In that the Apostles doth exhort to the mortification of these finnes, it shewes plainly, that we by nature are prone to fall into them; and herein is discovered unto us the great corruption of our nature, which (without Gods grace) is prone to such vile, monstrous, and such ugly finnes. I shewed the greatnesse of the corruption of nature in handling the 11. vers. of the second chap. in that it is a body of flesh; but hereby it may further appeare to us, in that it shewes it selfe in so many foule sins of one kind, and some of them so enormous and monstrous, as they violate the very law of nature: yea so great is the corruption of our nature, breaking out into these finnes, that age will not abate the burning lust that it sueth out from thence. May wee not observe it, that even aged persons, whose bodies are decrepit and past the practice of uncleannesse, yet the fire of lust is still burning in their hearts, and let loose their tongues to filthy idleness. Oh then the huge heape of corruption that is in our nature! The Papists say, wee aggravate the filth of nature too much; they stand on their pure naturals; but indeed the filth of it cannot be sufficiently spoken of; as one saith well, an Angell cannot sufficiently point out the mystery of sin and filthinesse of nature.

Vse. 1
We are to take notice of the filthinesse of our nature, and to use all good means to keep us from foule and monstrous finnes.

which is the
nature of
man
which is the
nature of
man

Let us take knowledge of it, and let it stirre us up to use all good means that may keepe us from these finnes; we have the seed of all these finnes within us: and thinke not that age will mortifie thy lust, or that humane wit will keepe thee from these finnes, as some use to say; Oh, such a one is a jolly wise man, I marvel therefore that he should so overshoot himselfe, and fall into that sinne of fornication; implying thereby that humane wisdom is sufficient to keepe from filthinesse. No no, thou art deceived if thou so thinke. *David* was no foole, and yet we know he fell into this sinne: yea consider it well, that *David* when hee was somewhat growne in yeeres, and had also the remedy against it: yea, (as those times suffered) many wives; yet fell in to the sinne of adultery: therefore be not thou secure, and thinke thy selfe safe, because thou art wise, or aged, or hast the remedy. No, no, thinke on the corruption of thy nature, and still use all the good means that may keepe thee from these finnes. Labour thou to feare God in thine heart, and that his grace may sanctifie, and cleanse it from filthy lust, and when any unclean conceit is call into thy minde, speedily reject it, bend

bend thy mind another way, take In hand some businessse, about which thou canst be busie indeed, and call to God for strength, and then (no doubt) he will helpe thee to quench that fierie dart.

Come we now to the fifth particular sinne here specified, namely Covetousnesse [and Covetousnesse which is Idolatry].

In speaking of this sinne (keeping my selfe still as neare as I can to the purpose of the Apostle) I will observe the order I held in handling of the former finnes. As first, I will shew what covetousnesse is. Secondly, the greatnesse of that sinne. Thirdly, the meanes that are to bee used for the mortification of it, with some application of the same. And then come to some generall doctrine that may be gathered from these words.

First, therefore know we that Covetousnesse is an inward breach of the eighth commandment, it is the theft of the heart, as the Apostle *Petr.* 2. Epist. 2. 14. saith of wicked men, *They have hearts exercised with Covetousnesse.* It may bee thus briefly described: It is an immoderate desire of having much (for the originall word here used doth signifie) and we are to understand it, with reference to outward riches.

Now for the better conceiving of the nature of this sinne, two questions are briefly to be answered.

First, it may be demanded, whether there may bee a moderate desire of outward wealth, or no?

Ans. There may; for desire is a naturall affection: and (being towards any good things, as riches are in themselves:) it is lawfull and good, when it is with due measure and moderation, according to the nature of the thing desired.

Secondly it may be demanded; when is the desire of outward wealth moderate?

Ans. When a man doth desire riches, as outward things and blessings on the left hand, and not on the right, and doth desire onely such a measure of outward wealth, as the Lord in his wisdom knowes to bee meete and necessary for him, both for the sustentation of nature, and the preservation of his life, and for the maintenance of that lawfull state, condition, and dignity in which he is set. And this is warranted to us by that prayer of *Agar*, Prov. chap. 30. ver. 8. *Feed me with food convenient for me: or with bread of my allowance.* Where we see that *Agar* prayed to God, and desired of him that he might have food of his allowance, that is, the daily portion which God by his wisdom and providence had cut out for him, both to sustaine his nature, and to further him in the service of God: and if wee desire such a measure of outward riches, then is our desire moderate and lawfull. And by this wee may further conceive when our desire of riches is immoderate, namely, when we desire more outward wealth, than God sees necessary for the preservation of our lives, and the maintenance of our lawfull state and condition: and that immoderate desire of riches is covetousnesse.

I might shew this to be a great sin many waies, so that it is a sin against God, a breach of his Law, it shewes us out of the Kingdome of God: but I will make it manifest by that which the Apostle doth here subjoyne, that it is Idolatry, adding to that one thing further.

First therefore, Covetousnesse must needs bee a great sinne in that it is Idolatry, in that it is a spirituall Idolatry, and so not onely a sinne against the second Table, but against the first also, in such sort, as hee, or shee, that is possessed with it, is a spirituall Idolater, as the Apostle saith, *Ephes.* chap. 5. ver. 5. which is said not onely in regard of the covetous mans love to riches, suspending his love to God (for so fornicators, and other sinners may also be said to be Idolaters) but in that respect which is more proper to this sinne, which is, that covetous men put their trust in riches, which ought to bee wholly put in God, and

5

I
What covetousnesse is.

Quest. 2.

I

Answer.

I

Answer

The greatnes
of this sinne.

I

The ground of covetousnesse.

and is a chiefe part of that holy and inward worship wee owe unto God.

For indeed the very ground of covetousnesse, and of an insatiable desire of riches is this: men have a false and foolish imagination, that wealth will bring some happinesse, and that if they have store of wealth, then they are in safety and happy case; and thereupon their desire of riches is enlarged, and they become exceeding greedy and insatiable in desiring and seeking after them, and having abundance are still covetous, and so withdraw their hearts from the Lord, and trust to their riches as to holds most strong and mighty.

Yea, many times covetous rich men so trust to their riches, as thereby in their conceit they secure themselves against calamities; they thinke themselves free from danger of famine, and many other afflictions: yea, we verifie this by a common speech of men: we commonly use to say of one that is wealthy: Oh, he cannot doe amiss, he hath the world at will; as if wee should say, he is free from danger, no hurt can come to him; and this is undoubtedly true of all covetous persons: they make their goods their god, they place happinesse in them, and they rest on them, as on a foundation most sure and stable. That which Iob saith in way of clearing himselfe, Iob 31. 24. is doubtlesse true of all covetous persons, *They make gold their hope, and say to the wedge of gold thou art my confidence.* And hence it is that the Apostle requireth Timothy, 1 Tim. 6. 17. to charge rich men that they trust not to their uncertaine riches, knowing that to be a common sinne of rich men, to trust to their riches. And thus is the covetous person an idolater, the divell setting up in his heart (which ought to be the Temple of God) the idoll of riches; and so is covetousnesse (without question) a great and grievous sinne.

2
The effects of covetousnesse.

Yet in the second place the greater sinne of this sinne will further appeare to us, if we consider the fearefull effects of it, 1 Timoth. 6. 9. the Apostle saith, *They that will be rich, they that have an insatiable desire of riches, fall into temptation and snare, and into many foolish and unprofitable lusts, which destroy men in perdition and destruction:* and in the tenth verse hee shuts up all in generall, *that it is the very root of all evil:* it is the mother of all mischiefs: which wee are thus to understand, that where this sinne of covetousnesse is, there sinne aboundeth: there is no evil that a covetous man will abstaine from, if it may further his gain; neither will he willingly doe any good, that seemet contrary to his profit. Yea, this sinne of covetousnesse it carrieth a man with a violent streame to sinne, even against conscience: it made Ahab sicke till hee had his desire, both Naboths vineyard, and his life; it set Judas forward (against all sense) to sell his Master for thirty pieces of silver, and that after divers admonitions: and whence come treacheries, and cruell murders (sometimes of fathers and mothers) but commonly from hence. The covetous heart is set on the booke, saying to it selfe, by this meanes, such an house, such land, or such a summe of money shall be mine, and the hart being set on that, it puts out all light of religion, of reason, and sometimes of nature it selfe. Yea further (which is worst of all) this sinne of covetousnesse, it brings a man or woman almost to an impossibility of repentance, and salvation. It is almost impossible that a covetous person should be saved, Mark 10. 24. saith our Saviour, *It is easier for a Camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God,* namely, a covetous rich man, the reason is given by our Saviour in the exposition of the parable. Mat. 13. 12. The covetous heart is taken up with the cares of this world, and those cares the seed of the Word, and hinder it from taking place in the hart, and so frustrate all means of repentance and salvation. And of this the Lord hath complained, Ezech. 33. 25. *They come to thee (saith he) as people who are come, and my people sit before thee, and heare thy words, but their heart goeth after covetousnesse.* Their covetous hearts will not suffer them to profit by the preaching of the Word, therefore without question the sinne of covetousnesse, bringeth such a root of bitterness, and

and bringing forth such cursed fruits, must needs be confessed in this respect also to be a great sinne.

Come wee then to consider such meanes that serve for the mortification of this foule sinne, the lust of covetousnesse. The speciall meanes that serve to that purpose are chiefly three.

The first is, a due consideration of the insufficiency of riches (in themselves, and of themselves) to doe us any good: for (as we have heard) it is an imagination of some good, or happiness to bee found in riches, that sets the heart on worke to desire them excessively. We must therefore labour truly to understand and consider the insufficiency of them (in themselves) to doe us any good: that of themselves they are not able to doe us good, as indeed they are not, our owne experience may teach us so much. Wee see sometimes a man pines away in the midst of plenty, though he have abundance of wealth, yet nothing is able to doe him good, unless the Lord blesse it as a meane of good unto him: It is not all the wealth in the world that of it selfe can helpe us, or keepe away any judgement of God from us. Prov. 11. 4. *Riches availe not in the day of wrath:* this we must labour to be perswaded of, and wee shall finde it a notable meane to expell out of our hearts the lust of covetousnesse.

The second meane to this purpose is this; we are to consider that abundance of wealth given to us upon our greedy and unsatiable desire of it, is not onely insufficient to doe us good, but hath the curse of God attending on it: for we sinned in so desiring it, and our sinfull desire being satisfied, that abundance is given unto us in Gods wrath, and not in his mercy. Why then should we enlarge our hearts immoderately to desire wealth, which being given upon that desire, hath the curse of God attending on it?

The third meane serving for the mortification of the lust of covetousnesse, is contentation: the holy Ghost saith, Heb. 13. 5. *Let your conversation be without covetousnesse, and be content with those things that ye have:* where hee makes an opposition between contentation and covetousnesse: so that where contentation is, there cannot bee covetousnesse. It is an excellent meane to drive it out: wee must therefore labour for contentation, even to bee well pleased with that particular state, wherein the Lord hath set us, and to esteeme it the best estate for us, be it better, or be it worse. And to this end wee are to consider that nothing comes unto us but by the good providence of God, and (we being his children) from the good and gracious hand of the Lord. And againe, that wee are lesse than the least of Gods mercies: as Jacob said, Genes. 32. 10. that wee are unworthy to draw breath in the aire: and these things well considered, will settle our hearts with contentation, and will bee an excellent meane to root out the lust of covetousnesse. Having now seene this sinne of covetousnesse what it is, and the greatness of it, that it is as the sinne of idolatry, and that it brings forth many fearefull effects especially, that it brings almost an impossibility of repentance and salvation: it needethly concernes every one of us to looke into our selves, to see whether we be guilty of this sinne or no? If wee duly examine our selves, it is to bee feared that the lust of our hearts will be found infected with this sinne, our practice shewes it: what having and shoving is there for the things of this life? Doe not such as be wealthy use all meanes, both in buying and selling, to keepe the poore still under? doe they not many times sweepe the market of a commodity, so that others that come after them, can finde nothing but the refuse, or bee forced to buy at the worst hand? and what should I say of our fraudulent and deceitfull dealing, and our seeking and taking advantage one against another, for the enriching of our selves? doe not these things (and many more that might be brought) plainly shew that we are covetous?

Obiect. I give every one his own, and I take nothing but that the law gives me.

This

Means serving
for the mortifi-
cation of the sin
of covetousnes,
are three.

1. *Means.*

2

Note.

3

We are to ex-
amine our
selves touch-
ing the sin of
covetousnesse.

Obiect.

Answer

Two motives
to stirre us up
to use meanes
to mortifie
the lust of
covetousnesse.

This thou maist doe, and yet be covetous. If thine heart bee ever musing and thinking of riches, if it be thy greatest joy when thou increasest thy wealth, and thy greatest sorrow, when thou sufferest any losse in outward things, certainly thou art covetous: so that if we thorowly examine our selves, it is to be feared that the most will be found corrupted with this sinne of covetousnesse. Therefore we are to be stirred up to use the meanes that serve for the mortifying of it, and to this purpose consider we onely two things.

First this: thou mayest heare the word with joy, and have many good things in thee, yet if thine heart bee possessed with covetousnesse, that will not suffer any grace to take rooting in thee: a croppe of come will as soone thrive on a waste mountaine, or in a thicke thornie hedge, as grace will grow in thine heart if that thou be covetous.

Againe if thou care not for inward growth of grace, yet I am sure thou carest for the continuance of thy wealth; know therefore that covetousnesse will in time wast and consume it. One compares covetousnesse to a theefe, and saith, it is in vaine for thee to locke up thy riches, so long as thou hast within, the great theefe covetousnesse: and indeed the holy Ghost saith, Prov. 11. 28. *He that trusteth in his riches (as every covetous person doth) he shall fall*: for besides his inability of standing, he hath the hand of God to pursue him, and to push him downe; therefore certainly he shall fall, and his estate shall not continue, if not in his time yet in his sonnes dayes; and we shall find it true, that hardly a third heire shall enjoy the wealth of a covetous worldling. If then wee either regard the inward growth of grace, or the continuance of that wealth wee have with comfort: let us bee stirred up to use all good meanes, serving for the mortifying of the lust of covetousnesse: labour thou rightly to consider the insufficiency of riches in themselves to doe thee good; and that riches being excessively desired, and so given, upon that desire they have the curse of God attending upon them; and withall, labour to be contented with thy present estate, esteeming that the best estate for thee, as comming from the good providence of God, and that thou art less than any mercy of God vouchsafed unto thee, that so thou maist root out of thine heart the cursed lust of covetousnesse.

Some generall doctrines remaine to bee gathered from these words: I will onely point at them.

Doct. 10.

The having of
much wealth
is not unlaw-
full, but the
immoderate
desire of having
much.

Vse.

We are to mo-
derate our de-
sire of wealth,
and having
much, to use
it well.

Doct. 11.

Idolatri may
be in respect
of baser things
than Saints
or Angels.

Vse

Confutation of
a Popish distin-
ction.

First, in that covetousnesse is here condemned, wee may gather, that the having of much is not condemned, but the immoderate desire of having much. If God by his good hand cast abundance of wealth on us, wee neither desiring nor seeking after it, we may lawfully hold and use it. We find many testimonies and examples in Scripture, warranting the having of much, (if God give it) and the using of it: if we use it to Gods glory, and the good of our selves and others, and with moderation, not setting our hearts upon it. Psalm. 62. 10. *If riches increase set not your hearts thereon.*

The second generall thing offered hence is this: we see here, that there may be idolatri in respect of baser things than Saints or Angels; and therefore that Popish distinction of *latria* and *dulia* of worship and service, is but vaine and foolish: the Papists are not able to defend it.

Vers. 6. *For the which things sakes, the wrath of God commeth on the children of disobedience.*

Our Apostle having vers. 5. laid before the Colossians, his exhortation to mortification, and reckoned up some particular finnes, that they were to labour by all good meanes to mortifie in this sixth verse, and in the seventh following, he labours to strengthen his exhortation, and to urge it upon them, and that by two reasons.

The ſuit is laid downe in this ſixth verſe, and it is taken from the dangerous and fearefull effects, that the finnes before ſpecified bring forth, namely this, that they draw downe the wrath of God on them. The reaſon may thus be framed, thoſe finnes that bring downe Gods wrath are to be mortified, but the finnes before ſpoken of bring downe the wrath of God, therefore they are to be mortified: and this reaſon is further enlarged, by expreſſing the perſons on whom theſe finnes bring downe the wrath of God (namely) on the children of diſobedience, and that is chiefly the reference of this verſe to the former, and the ſumme of it.

For the which things ſakes, &c. That is, for the which ſins ſakes, before ſpoken of (the wrath of God) By the wrath or anger of God, we are to underſtand the effects of his anger, his puniſhments, plagues, and judgements in this world, but eſpecially the everlaſting torments in hell: for it is frequent and uſual in Scripture, to put the anger, or wrath of God for the effects of his anger: Romans 2. 5. the Apoſtle ſaith, Thou after thine hardneſſe, and heart that cannot repent, heapeſt up, wrath, that is, heapeſt up puniſhments, and judgements, as it may plainly appeare in the words following; (againſt the day of wrath, &c.) that is, againſt the day of judgement, when the Lord ſhall execute his juſt judgement on the wicked, when the Lord Jeſus ſhall ſay to them on the left hand, Go ye curſed into everlaſting fire, &c. (commeth) that is, certainly, and without all faile, ſeizeth and taketh hold on (the children of diſobedience) this is a forme of ſpeech often uſed in Scripture: it is an Hebraiſme, and by it wee are to underſtand ſuch as are obſtinate and wilfull in their diſobedience, ſuch as will not be diſſwaded from ſinne, nor yeeld to any divine admonitions, that might draw them from ſin: but are as it were, made and framed of diſobedience, and as it were, brought out of the wombe of wilfull rebellion, and therefore called children of diſobedience: in one word, by this manner of ſpeech is meant, ſuch as are diſobedient, rebellious and refractarie in ſinne, and will not yeeld to any good counſell or admonition; nor by any good meanes be brought to repentance.

Thus then wee are to conceive the meaning of the Apoſtle, in the words of this verſe, as if hee had ſaid: For the which finnes ſakes, before ſpecified, the plagues and judgements of God in this life, and everlaſting torments in hell doe ſeize, and certainly take hold on ſuch as are diſobedient and rebellious, hard-hearted and impenitent, and will not by any good meanes be brought to repentance.

Now before wee come to conſider the matter of doctrine offered from the words themſelves, obſerve we the argument of the Apoſtle, the reaſon he uſeth to perſwade to the mortifying of the finnes before ſpoken of. Hee takes his argument from the effect of thoſe finnes: that theſe finnes, and every one of them not repented of, brings downe the wrath of God, and therefore they are to be mortified. The Apoſtle would have the Coloſſians to conſider the heavy wrath of God attending on thoſe finnes, and thereby to be moved to the mortifying of them.

Hence wee may gather thus much, that a ſerious and due conſideration of Gods wrath waiting on ſinne, is a notable meanes to move men to repentance: for mortification is one part of repentance: or I may thus deliver the point grounded on this context, and other places of Scripture.

A ſerious conſideration of the heavy wrath of God and of our fearefull condemnation that abideth for ſinne, ever goes before true repentance for ſinne. Never did any, nor ſhall any truly repent of any knowne ſinne without a ſerious conſideration of the curſe, and condemnation due to that ſinne going before.

The reaſon is plaine, true contrition of heart muſt goe before true repentance: theſe two may be compared to the needle and the thred, contrition is as the

Reason, 1.

Interpretation.

more Bib A
to mortify
of godly
-enough

Doct. 1.
A ſerious con-
ſideration of
Gods wrath
that abideth
for ſin, ever
goes before
true repen-
tance for ſin.

Reasons.

the needle piercing the heart, and making way and entrance, then follows the thred of repentance; the heart must first be humbled and broken for sinne, and then follows repentance: now the heart is never truly humbled for sinne, till it be pressed with the grievousnesse of sinne, and the heauey wrath of God due for the same: therefore certainly a serious consideration of the wrath of God against sinne, is ever the fore-runner of true repentance. Wee may see it plainly in the example of the Jewes, Act. chap. 2. vers. 37. first they were pricked in their hearts, their hearts were compunct and wounded at the sight of their sinne, and the wrath of God due unto it: and then in vers. 38. follows *Peter* counsell, *turne away, repent, or amend your lives.*

Vse.
Many deceive themselves in respect of true repentance.

This lets us see, that many deceive themselves in respect of true repentance: they hold themselves truly repentant for their knowen sinnes, and will needs be so accounted, and yet they can witnesse to themselves, that their hearts were never wounded with a consideration of Gods wrath; they never set themselves before the judgement seat of the Lord, nor considered how grievous a thing their sinne is in the sight of God, and how displeasing to him, and what fearefull condemnation is due for the same. Haply they have had a vanishing touch of heart for it, causing them to send forth a naturall sigh or sob, and causing them to say, they have sinned, and they are sorrie for it, and they crie God mercie, or the like; but their hearts were never truly pressed downe, and broken by the waight and burthen of their sinnes, and with consideration of the fearefull wrath of God for the same. Out of question, I now speake that which many of us know to be true in our selves, if we deale truly with ourselves, wee cannot deny it. Let us therefore not any longer deceive our selves, but learne this lesson, that a serious consideration of Gods heauey wrath due to sin, ever goes before true repentance for sinne, and make use of it. Dost thou know thy sin, and wouldest thou repent for it truly? then set thy selfe before the judgement seat of God, and consider the greatnesse of thy sinne, and what fearefull wrath and condemnation abideth thee for it, and let the Law be thy Schoole-maister, as the Apostle teacheth, Galat. 3. 24. let it whip and scourge thy naked conscience, shewing thee thy sinne and the punishment due for the same, yea, never torest till the consideration of thy sinne, and of the wrath of God due to thy sin, have brought thee downe as it were to the gates of hell, and to an holy despair in thy selfe, and then no doubt (if thou belong to God) Christ will shew thee comfort, he will worke in thee true repentance, and give thee strength against thy sinne, yea thou shalt be delivered from the guilt and punishment of thy sin, and from the power of it.

Come we now to the doctrine offered from the words themselves.

First, observe wee in a word briefly a different manner of speaking in Scripture, in respect of our holinesse and sinne. We read here and in other places of Scripture, that for sinne comes wrath; but never shall wee finde it said in Scripture, that for our holinesse, or good workes comes life and salvation: the Apostle, Rom. 6. 23. having said (*that the wages of sin is death*) goes not on with his opposition, that the wages of righteousness is life, but he changeth his termes, and saith, *but the gift of God is eternall life.*

A different manner of speaking in Scripture.

Reason.

The reason is this, because sinne is perfectly evill, but our holinesse, or good workes, even the best of them, are good but in part: but I forbear to speake further of that point.

In that the Apostle saith here, that the sinnes (before spoken of) bring downe Gods wrath; no doubt his purpose was not onely to perswade the Colossians to mortifie them, but to worke in them a religious feare and care to avoid them: for having the same sentence, Ephes. 5. 6. and against the same sin, hee addes, vers. 7. *be not therefore companions with them*: the point hence offered is this.

We

We are to feare and avoid these, and all other knowne sins whatsoever, even because (of themselves) they bring downe Gods wrath and judgements, howsoever wee are principally, to feare and avoid sinne, even because it is sinne, and displeasing to God, if there were no hell nor punishment due unto it; that is the true feare of Gods children: yet we may, and we are in the second place, to feare sinne in respect of Gods wrath and judgements, and hence it is that the Apostle, 2 Corinth. 5. having made knowne, vers. 10. *That we must all appeare before the judgement seat of Christ*, vers. 11. hee saith, *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord we perswade men*. Wee knowing how dreadfull shall bee the doome of wicked men at the day of judgement, wee perswade men to avoid sinne. This feare was in David, Psalm. 119. 120. *My flesh trembleth for feare of thee*. And hee addes further, *I am afraid of thy judgements*. David had a religious feare of God, he feared God himselfe, hee feared to offend him, and then in the second place hee stood in awe of his judgements, and indeed such is the canker of our nature, that the most regenerate have need to let before them the wrath and judgements of God due to sinne, that even in consideration thereof they may be afraid of sinne.

Let not then such as truly feare God, thinke themselves exempt from all feare of Gods wrath and judgements: though they be freed from the wrath of God by Christ, and doe feare God for his mercie, with a filiall and child-like feare: yet that doth not exclude a feare of his judgements to keep us from sin: wee are chiefly, and in the first place to feare and avoid sinne, even because it is sinne; but in the second place, we are to feare the wrath of God against sin; yea, we are often and diligently to ponder on the threatnings wee finde in the Booke of God against sinne, and to consider the execution of his wrath upon impenitent sinners, and not to passe by the judgements of God, heard of, or seen in the world, but to lay them to heart, that thereby our hearts may be still kept in the feare of God, and that wee may even carrie in us a reverent awe of his great and glorious Majestic.

Observe wee further, that the Apostle here speaks in the time present; hee saith not, for which things sake the wrath of God hath come, or will come, but commeth; which implyeth a continuall action, that the wrath of God ceaseth not to come on such, as live in the sinnes before named, or in any knowne sinne; yea, many times the wrath of God is on men living in this world, when they have little or no apprehension of it; yea, therein is the wrath of God on them in most fearefull manner, in that they have no sense nor feeling of it, striking them with blockishnesse and dulnesse of spirit, and hardnesse of heart, giving them up to a reprobate sence, so that hence wee may conclude the certaintie of Gods wrath.

That his wrath faileth not to come on such as live, and continue in knowne sinnes: it is so certaine that the Lords wrath shall seize on them, that live in knowne sinnes, as that they have the earnest of it, and it hath already taken hold of them: and to this agreeth that speech of Christ, Iohn. 3. 36. *He that believeth in the Sonne hath everlasting life, and he that obeyeth not the Sonne shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*. 2 Pet. 2. 3. The Apostle saith, that the damnation of false teachers (saith not) as if he had said, their judgement and damnation is comming, and shall certainly fall on them, and to that purpose our Apostle speaks powerfully, Ephel. 5. 6. *Let no man deceive you with vain words; for, for such things commeth the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience*, as if he had said, haply some will tell you, that fornication, &c. are no great sinnes, but humane slips and infirmities, and that they exclude not out of Gods kingdome: but let no man so deceive you, their words are both vaine and deceitfull: learne you to know it for a certaine truth, that for such things the wrath of God commeth upon the children of disobedience.

Doff. 2.

We are to feare and avoid all knowne sinnes, because of themselves they bring downe Gods wrath and judgements upon us.

Vse.

Gods children are not exempt from all feare of Gods wrath and judgements.

Doff. 3.

Gods wrath faileth not to come on such as live and continue in knowne sinnes.

Use
We are to be
perswaded
that Gods
wrath shall cer-
tainly come on
wicked and re-
bellious sin-
ners.

And for the use of this, let it sinke into our hearts, and let us be fully perswaded of it, that the wrath of God, his plagues and judgements in this life, and fearefull torments in hell, shall most certainly come on wicked and rebellious sinners. Men are hardly brought to beleeve this, it will hardly sinke into their hearts that their finnes are so hainous as Preachers would make them, and that Gods judgements doe so certainly abide for them: if they did beleeve these things, would they live in whoredome, drunkennesse, and other knowne finnes as they doe? would they live in malice and envie? would they lye and flander, raile, curse, and sweare, and commit all filthy abominations? Their living and pleasing themselves in these, and other like finnes, makes it plaine they beleeve not that Gods wrath certainly commeth on wicked and rebellious sinners, they tremble not when Gods wrath and his judgements are denounced. If one should now run thorow the streets, and cry, Fire, Fire, our hearts would bee suddenly smitten with feare: but let the Minister of God stand, and cry, fire, fire, yea the fire of hell, which is kindled by the breath of the Lord, as the Prophet spekes Isai. chap. 30. vers. 33. yet many of our hearts are nothing moved, and that is, a plaine evidence, wee beleeve not that Gods wrath abideth for such finnes? Well, let us never rest till we be fully perswaded of this, that so we may seeke speedily to make our peace with the Lord, and withall thinke on the greatnesse of his wrath: *Nabum* saith, 1. 6. Before the face of his wrath none can abide, the mountaines tremble, the waters flee away, the rocks are rent in sunder at the blast, or breath of his displeasure, and shall we be able to endure it? Thinke on it, and the Lord make us wise to beleeve these things.

Now, from this word (*commeth*) wherein the Apostle doth, as it were, put a person on the wrath of God, and (as it were) legs and feet to walke upon, I might shew that they who by custome of sinne, and hardnesse of heart are so blockish that they see not Gods wrath in it selfe, shall one day (without repentance, so sensibly see and feeble the same, as if it were a person doing execution on them: but that may be referred to the doctrine of the certaintie of Gods wrath already delivered. I passe by it and come to speake of the persons on whom the wrath of God commeth for the finnes before named, and these are the children of disobedience (that is) as we have heard, such as are obstinate in their finnes, and will not yeeld to any good counsell or admonition, nor by any good meanes be brought to repentance.

Observe then that the Apostle saith not, the wrath of God commeth on all whatsoever they be that are guiltie of the finnes before named, but he doth limit and bound his speech to the children of disobedience. The point hence offered is this:

Doct. 4.
Only obstina-
cie in sinne
brings Gods
wrath.

Reason.

It is onely obstinacie in sinne that brings Gods wrath: It is not any of the finnes before named, nor any other particular sinne whatsoever: but the lying in sinne, and not repenting of it, that brings Gods wrath. When men, notwithstanding all gracious admonitions, or fearefull threatnings, or other meanes that can be used, lye still in their sinne, and tye sinne to sinne, they make a way to Gods judgement to fall upon them. It is continuance in sinne (without repentance) that puts downe the wrath of God. For why? Gods mercie is greater than the greatest heape of sinne, and it is neither number, nor measure of sinne that doth condemne (for God might in justice condemne for one onely sinfull thought) yet Gods mercy is promised, and belongs onely to repentant sinners. Therefore it is not any particular sinne, nor many finnes together, but onely obstinacy and continuance in sinne, living and dying in sinne (without repentance) that brings judgement and condemnation: even the sinne against the holy Ghost is therefore unpardonable, because it is impossible that they who fall into that sin, should be renewed by repentance, as the holy Ghost saith, Heb. 6. 6. We read Isai. 1. that the Iewes were sinke deep in rebellion, they were neither moved

moved by the Lord his benefits, nor by his punishments to amendment: yet verſe 16. the Prophet ſtirres them up to repentance, and ſaith, *Waſh you, make you cleane: take away the evill of your workes from before mine eyes: ceaſe to doe evill.* And then, verſe 18. *Come now, and let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord, though your finnes were as crimſon, they ſhall be made white as ſnow: though they were red like ſcarlet, they ſhall be as meale:* plainly teaching us, that there is mercie with the Lord to true repentance for ſins, how great ſoever they bee: and therefore it is a certaine truth that not any particular ſinne, nor many finnes, but only continuance in ſinne brings Gods wrath.

Here then (for the uſe of this) is a ground of exceeding great comfort for ſuch as being guiltie of ſinne, having grace to repent of it, ſuch as (being admoniſhed of their ſin) are truly humbled for it, as David was, 2 Sam. 12. and as Jeſebabab was, being told of his ſin by Iehoi. 2 Chro. 19. 2. ſuch as knowing their ſin, confeſſe and bewaile it, turne from it, and forſake it, here is comfort for them, they are not liable to the wrath of God for that ſin: and if it be ſo, that after repentance, they fall into the ſame ſinne againe of frailtie, and againſt their purpoſe, yet if they recover themſelves by repentance, and breake off that ſin by new and ſpeedie repentance, even that ſin committed after repentance, and againe repented of, makes them not ſubj. to Gods wrath: howſoever indeed ſuch a ſinne will much weaken thy comfort, and thou ſhalt find, thou haſt juſt cauſe to pray with David, Pſa. 51. 12. *Reſtore to me the joy of thy ſalvation:* yet certainly take this for thy comfort, it ſhall never be laid upon thee to thy condemnation. For wee may not imagine, that there is leſſe mercie with the Lord who is the God of mercie, than he requires of us towards our brethren: now hee hath enioyned us, Luk. 17. 4. *That if a brother ſinne againſt us ſeven times in a day: which is not to be underſtood of new offences only, but of all whatſoever (a certaine number being put for an uncertaine) even all offences, or how often fallen into by frailtie: and ſeven times turne againe unto us, and ſay, it repents me, wee muſt forgive him, and ſhall the creature exall the Creator in goodneſſe and mercie? No, no, be aſſured of it to thy comfort: if ſeven times (that is) many times, thou ſinne againſt God by frailtie, even in the ſame thing, and ſo often with weeping eyes, and ſobbing ſoule fall at his feete for mercie: there is grace, mercie, and pardon with him to true repentance.* But let no man hereupon preſume, and turne this comfort into a licence to ſinne, and wilfully heape ſinne upon ſinne in hope of future repentance: ſo doing thou doeſt wreſt, and pervert this comfort, and caſt thy ſelfe upon a dangerous point: for what knoweſt thou whether ever thou ſhalt repent, or no? And take this with thee, though God have promiſed mercie and forgivenneſſe to true repentant ſinners, yet hee hath not promiſed repentance to every ſinner, that every one that ſinnes ſhall repent: thou findeſt not that, in any place of the booke of God: therefore receive not thy ſelfe, take heede of ſuch preſumption, and leaſe to make a right uſe of the doctrine of comfort now delivered. If thou have grace to acknowledge thy knowne ſinne, and to bee truly humbled for it, and to turne from it, though it hath bene often committed, yet there is mercie for thee with the Lord: yea ſweete and full of unſpeakable comfort is it, that the Lord would have his children ſo ſure of the pardon of their finnes, though they be many whereof hee gives them repentance, with a diſlike, and true loathing of them, as hee would have it an article of their faith: ſo as they be not ſound Chriſtians, if they beleve not the remiſſion of their finnes for which they are truly humbled. Let not man ſucke poiſon out of this ſweetneſſe, and hence draw libertie to ſinne, if hee doe, hee favours this doctrine not to liſe and ſalvation, but to death, and to his deeper damnation.

Again, is it ſo, that onely obſtinacie in ſinne brings Gods wrath downe upon beboveth every one to take heede of obſtinacie, and continuance in ſinne, and

Uſe I
Comfort for ſuch as have grace to repent of their finnes.

Note.

That if a brother ſinne againſt us ſeven times in a day: which is not to be underſtood of new offences only, but of all whatſoever (a certaine number being put for an uncertaine) even all offences, or how often fallen into by frailtie: and ſeven times turne againe unto us, and ſay, it repents me, wee muſt forgive him, and ſhall the creature exall the Creator in goodneſſe and mercie? No, no, be aſſured of it to thy comfort: if ſeven times (that is) many times, thou ſinne againſt God by frailtie, even in the ſame thing, and ſo often with weeping eyes, and ſobbing ſoule fall at his feete for mercie: there is grace, mercie, and pardon with him to true repentance.

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take heede of
obstinacie and
continuance in
sinne, as the
greatest iudge-
ment of God
in this life.

Note.

above all things in the world to avoid that as the greatest iudgement of God in this life: and to this end wee are to take heede of custome in sinne, for custome in sinne takes away the sense and feeling of sinne, and many not obstinate in sinne at the first, yet yeelding to sinne, and continuing in it for a time, at length they become obstinate and hardened: yea, wee shall finde it a certaine truth, that men first harden their owne hearts before the Lord come to harden them: they yeeld to sinne, and lie in sinne, and refuse to bee reformed, and then the Lord in his iust iudgement gives them over to sinne, and to the will of the divell to bee led of him at his will, and then they become obstinate in their sinne.

We reade in the booke of Exodus (and it is worth our marking) that *Pharaoh* many times hardened his owne heart before it was said that the Lord hardened it: we reade not that till Chap. 9. 12. Therefore let every one of us be admonished to take heed of continuing in any knowne sinne whatsoever it bee: learne thou to bee moved betimes, and often to bee moved with conscience of thy knowne sinne, lest thou hardening thine owne heart, the Lord also come to harden it, and then thy case is most fearefull, thou art then liable to the fearefull wrath of God in this life, and for ever in the life to come.

Before wee leave these words, one thing more is to be observed, and that is the phrase, or forme of speech here used by the Apostle: he saith not, on the reprobate, as he might have said, for onely on them comes the eternall wrath of God: but he saith, *On the children of disobedience*; on such as are disobedient and rebellious in sinne, and will not by any good counsell, admonition, or other meanes be drawne from sinne.

Doctrine 5.
It is a fearefull
thing to bee
wilfull in sin.

Hence wee are given to understand thus much, that it is a fearefull thing to bee wilfull in sinne, still to persevere, and to goe on in sinne after many admonitions, and many threatnings used to the contrary, to refuse all good admonitions, and threatnings against sinne: it is fearefull, it is a signe of reprobation, it is a signe that such persons as so doe, are appoynted to everlasting destruction. Understand the point aright: I confesse there may bee in the deare children of God a refusing, and a rejecting of the meanes of their good for a time, as they lying under some grievous temptation, and despairing of Gods mercie for a time, may for a fit refuse the meanes of comfort, and with *Iob* curse the day of their birth, and wish for death; *Iob 3. 11.* Yea, the deare children of God may sometimes fall into sinne, whereof they are preadmonished, whereof they are warned afore to take heede: it was *Dauids* case, *2 Sam. chap. 24.* in numbring of the people, though hee was dutifully admonished by *Iosh* not to doe it; yet hee (pricked forward with the pride of his owne heart) would needs in all haste have the people numbred: and so the deare children of God may for a fit, through the violence of temptation, refuse good counsell, and the meanes of their good, and may (notwithstanding forewarning) fall into sinne: therefore thus the point is to be conceived of us, that wilfulness in sinne, perseverance, and going on in sinne, after many admonitions to the contrary, is most dangerous, when it is with men as the Prophet speaks, *Zachar. chap. 7. vers. 11. 12.* *That they refuse to hearken, and pull away the shoulder, and stop their eares, that they should not heare, and make their hearts as an Adamant stone, &c.* That is fearefull, and that is more than a probable signe of their reprobation.

Reason.

And the reason is plaine, namely this: that is a resisting of the holy Ghost, as *Steepe* saith, *Act. 7. 51.* a withstanding of the Spirit of God in the ministrie of his messengers: therefore that must needs be a signe of reprobation.

Vse.

Their case is
fearefull who
wilfully per-

Such then as after many admonitions, and threatnings, wilfully persist and persevere in their knowne sinnes, may see in what fearefull state they stand. Hast thou beene often admonished of thy drunkenness; thy whoredome, thy pride,

pride, thy swearing, thy Sabbath-breaking, or of any other sinne whatsoever? And dost thou still (notwithstanding such often admonition) willfully persevere and continue in thy sin? then know thou to thy terrour, that thy continuing in thy sinne, scales up unto thee a fearfull conclusion: it is more than probable, thou art in the state of reprobation, and in the number of such as shall be damned; thou art a childe of disobedience, and wilfull rebellion, and therefore thou art not onely a child of wrath (as all are by nature) but it is more than likely, that thou shalt never be received to mercy, and that thou art a child of perdition, and art now trotting apace towards hell, and shalt one day be fuel for the fire of hell; which is a fearfull condition to be thought on, even with trembling: and if it be well considered, it is able to make thee (if hell have not taken full possession of thee) to bethinke thy selfe of speedy reformation. And therefore consider it, and let this admonition now prevaile with thee to that purpose; if it doe not, certainly it shall one day be a bill of enditement against thee, to thy deeper condemnation; therefore thinke on it, and in time make use of it.

Verf. 7. Wherein ye walked once, when ye lived in them.

IN this verse our Apostle useth another argument to enforce upon the Colossians his exhortation, to mortifie the finnes before named; the argument is from their former conversation, that they in former times walked in those sins, and therefore now they ought to mortifie them.

Before we come to stand on the words of this verse, consider wee this argument: In that the Apostle thus reasoneth: ye walked once in those finnes, therefore now you are to mortifie them.

Hence we are taught, that the remembrance of finnes, wherein we heretofore lived (and now have left) ought to profit us, it must not be idle, but an effectuall argument to stirre us up to the mortification of the flesh, it ought to worke in us continuall sorrow for those finnes, and a care more and more to kill and mortifie the lust and corruption of the flesh, Ephes. chap. 5. verf. 8. saith the Apostle, *ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord: walk as children of light.* The argument there, is the same that heere is used, that the remembrance of their former state, ought now to stirre them up to a greater care of holiness.

And thus ought it to be with us, and certainly so it is with all Gods children.

And therefore this may serve to warrant and make good that position, that even the sins of Gods children turne to their good, they are bettered by their sins past, repented of and pardoned; the remembrance of them makes them more thankfull to God for his mercy, more humble and lowly in themselves, more mild and equall towards others, and more warie and circumspect over their lives, and stirre them to the mortifying of the flesh. Hereby then try thy self, if the remembrance of thy sins past be pleasing to thee, and thou canst take delight in the remembrance of them, that is a signe of a reprobate minde; and though thou bee freed from the practice of them, yet thou art not delivered from the power of them, they are not yet repented of & pardoned; if thou wouldst be sure that thy former sins are repented of and forgiven, then labour thou for a sanctified remembrance of them, that thou maist remember them with griefe and sorrow of heart, and be bettered by the remembrance of them: even thereby be thou stirred up to further mortification of the flesh, and to live as much time as remaineth in the flesh, not after the lusts of men, but as the Apostle exhorteth, 1 Pet. 4. 2. *after the will of God: and that will scale up to thy conscience, assurance of the pardon of thy former finnes.*

fit in sin after many admonitions to the contrary.

Doctr. 1.

The remembrance of our sins past, and now left, ought to worke in us continuall sorrow for them, and a care more to mortifie the lust of the flesh.

For
Gods children are bettered by their sins, and so it ought to be with us.

Come

Come we now to stand on the words of this verse, they may bee referred to two heads.

The first is, an expressing of the former conversation of the Colossians in respect of the finnes before named, that they once in former times walked in those finnes, *wherein ye also walked once.*

The second is, a specifying of the time, when they walked in them, namely, *when they lived in them.* Wherein is also infolded the cause of their walking in those finnes, namely, a life that was powerfull in them: that when that life was powerfull in them, then they walked in those finnes.

Interpretation.

I will open and unfold the sence and meaning of the words, [*wherein*] some render the words thus [*among whom*] with relation to the last words of the verse foregoing [*the children of disobedience*] but indeed it is more agreeable to the context, and to the argument and purpose of the Apostle, to retain this translation [*wherein*] with a reference to the finnes before spoken of, and so the meaning is, in which finnes: [*ye also*] that is, you Colossians now called as well as others [*walked*] This word is metaphoricall, borrowed from passengers, or rather from such as walke in some place for pleasure and recreation: and so the Apostles meaning is, that they held on a course securely, and with delight in those finnes [*once*] that is, sometimes heretofore [*when ye lived in them*] herein the Apostle hath respect to that which he hath often said before, that they were dead with Christ: and so his meaning in saying (*when ye lived in them*) is, when your naturall corruption (as a kind of life) gave power and moving for the exercise and practice of those finnes. Thus then briefly conceive we the meaning of the Apostle, in the words of this verse: as if he had said: In which finnes before named, you beleiving Colossians, as well as others, held on your course securely heretofore, even when your naturall corruption was alive in you, and gave power and moving for the exercise and practice of these finnes.

The first thing here to bee marked is, that the Apostle saith, that the Colossians also walked in the finnes before named; signifying, that not onely the children of disobedience, but even they also (as well as others) before their calling and conversion, walked in those finnes.

Dott. 2.
The conversation of Gods chosen being yet uncalled, differs not from the conversation of the reprobate.

Hence then we are taught, that the conversation of Gods chosen (before their effectuall calling) differs not from the conversation of the reprobate, it is as vicious, as foule, and as much defiled with sinne, as the life and conversation of such as shall be damned. Gods chosen being yet in their naturall state, walke on in sinne, and please themselves in the wayes of sinne, as much as they that are appointed to destruction. There is no difference betweene the life of the one and the other, till he please God (by the powerfull works of his spirit and grace) to make a separation and difference betweene them. Reade to this purpose, Ephes. 2. 1. 2 3. 1 Cor. 6. 11. Rom. 8. 17. 19. those places make this a cleare point.

Reason.

And the reason of it is manifest, namely this: there is the same corruption of nature in the elect and reprobate, and it is powerfull in them both, before effectuall calling; and therefore before such calling, there is no difference between the conversation of the one and the other.

Use 1
We may not iudge of the future and final state of any man, by his present condition.

On this ground then we must learne to take heed wee determine not of the final state of any man, being as yet in his naturall state and condition: wee may not be so bold as to say, such an one is a reprobate, and a castaway. The life of Gods chosen before their calling, differs not from the life of the reprobate: therefore iudge not of the future and final state of any man, by his present condition. We may lawfully iudge a naturall and carnall man to be so, and as yet to be in a fearfull estate, even in the way to destruction: but to goe further, than that, is to breake into Gods secret counsell: what a naturall man may bee in after times, leave that to the Lord.

But

But I chiefly remember this doctrine to this end, to stirre up as many as are delivered from their naturall condition, to blesse God for that great benefite. As many as are effectually called, are therein infinitely bound to magnifie the mercie of the Lord; before such calling, there was no difference betweene their life, and the life of the reprobate; they walked on in the same broad way with them; they lay wallowing and pleasing themselves in the waies of sinne; and had no more minde to any thing that is good, than the vilest miscreant that lives in the world; and who hath made a difference betweene thee and a reprobate? who hath taken thee out of the way to hell, and set thy feet in the way to life and salvation? onely the Lord of his goodnesse, and by the power of his spirit and grace: and if thou well consider it, thou canst not bee sufficiently thankfull to him for so great a mercie. When therefore thou doest see others (yet uncalled) pleasing themselves in a course of sinne, and pouring out the rottenness of their owne hearts, and walking on in the wayes of of sinne; thinke on it, and consider it, not to insult over them, but rather to pittie them; and thereby call to mind what thou wast before the Lord wrought on thee by his spirit and grace: consider that thou seest in them a lively picture of thine owne former life; and meditate with thy selfe on this manner.

Surely, such an one was I, so lived I once as these men now doe; I tooke as great pleasure in my sinne, as they now doe in theirs; and I ran as fast towards hell as they now run. Oh then how much am I bound to the Lord for his mercie towards me, who of his meere mercie hath turned my feet another way, and hath put a difference, and made a distinction betweene my life and theirs; what shall I render to the Lord for so great a mercie? this ought to be thy meditation in respect of thy effectual calling, when thou seest others left still in their naturall state and condition.

Observe in the next place, the word here used (*walked*) [*wherein ye also walked*] (saith the Apostle, signifying that the Colossians (before their calling) held on a continued course in their sinnes, securely with pleasure, as men walking and going in some pleasant way with delight.

Here then is laid before us the propertie of such as are in their naturall condition: they walke in sinne, they doe not simply sinne, for so doe the most regenerate; but they hold a purposed course in sinne, and that with pleasure, and much delight.

Haply some may say, such as are in their naturall condition are dead in sinne; chap. 2. 13. how then can they bee said to walke in sinne? is that possible?

The answer is easie; these two things rightly conceived may well stand together, there is no opposition betweene them, as there seemes to bee; for naturall men are said to bee dead in sinne in respect of goodnesse, because they are so held under the power of sinne, as a dead man is under death, and have no power at all to move towards any thing that is good. But they are said to walke in sinne, in respect of sinne it selfe, and therein they have lively-hood and activitie; therein they have not onely a power to move, but doe actually move, stirre, and exercise all the powers of their soules, and members of their bodies: wee are therefore to hold it for a truth, that it is proper to men in their naturall condition to walke in sinne, to hold on a secure course in sinne with pleasure. Such as are regenerate, they fall sometimes into sinne, but it is one thing to fall into sinne, and another to walke in it; as it is one thing of weaknesse to slip, or fall into the mire; and another of purpose to walke in it, or to tumble in it after the manner of swine, or mad men: such is the difference betweene the regenerate and unregenerate: the regenerate of frailltie, and against their purpose now and then fall into sinne; but such as are in their naturall condition, they hold

Use 2.

Such as are delivered from their naturall state, are to blesse God for that benefite.

Doff. 3.

Such as are in their naturall condition hold on a purposed course in sin, and that with much delight in it.

Object.

Answ.

Difference between the regenerate and unregenerate, in respect of falling into sin.

observed with

Vse. 1

That Popish error contuted, that a naturall man may prepare himselfe to receive grace.

Vse 2.

Triall of our selves, whether we be regenerate or no.

It is not possible for a naturall man to hold on a continued course in sinne, they goe on with full purpose in sinne, and with pleasure adde sinne to sinne: and this the Apostle teacheth plainly, Ephes. chap. 2. vers. 2, 3. In his description of the pittall state of the Ephesians, hee saith, they in their naturall condition walked in sinne, and then he shewes how, namely, according to the course of this world, and after the manner of the children of disobedience, in the lusts of their flesh, in fulfilling the will of the flesh and of the minde, and were by nature the children of wrath, as well as others. And to this purpose speaks Jude, vers. 18. they walke after their owne ungodly lusts: and then he shewes of whom he meaneth it, vers. 19. even of such as are fleshly, that is, mere naturall men, having not the spirit, having no draught of sanctifying grace in them; no doubt in speculation we are well acquainted with this point.

Come we therefore to the use of it. And first, this doctrine meets with that error of the Papists, that a naturall man may prepare himselfe to receive grace. We shewed the folly of this conceit, chap. 2. 13. that men by nature are dead in sinne: it may hence also be refuted, for how is it possible that a man can prepare himselfe to receive grace, that is, running on with full purpose and consent of will another way, as every naturall man is? it is as possible that a violent streame should suddenly turne backward.

If any man make himselfe ready to receive grace, it must be by his will; now the will of a naturall man is turned from God, and can follow nothing but that which is evill and repugnant to Gods will; and therefore it is not possible that any naturall man should prepare himselfe to receive grace.

Let us make use of the point to our selves, and let us consider the doctrine delivered to this purpose. Is it proper to men (in their naturall condition) to walke in sinne, to hold on a course in sinne? then hereby examine thy selfe, hereby thou maist know in what state thou standest, whether thou be regenerate, or as yet in thy naturall condition. If thou carriest in thee a constant purpose not to sinne, and thy falling into sinne is with a spirituall striving against it, and being fallen, thou hast care to recover thy selfe by speedy repentance; then comfort thy selfe: thou art regenerate, the seed of God is in thee; 1 Joh. chap. 3. vers. 9. but on the contrary, if thou hold a purposed course in sinne, if thou walke in it with delight, and sinne without spirituall striving against it, and adde sinne to sinne with pleasure; certainly thou art in thy naturall state, and hast no assurance of any of the comforts of Gods children. I say without any spirituall striving, and I would have it observed, I meane such striving as is betweene the flesh and the spirit, betweene corruption and grace; for there may be a striving against in a naturall man, betweene his naturall conscience, and his appetite, lust or affection, and here we may be deceived.

Quest. You wil say, how shall wee know and discern the one from the other?

Ans.

The difference is this; the striving of naturall conscience with lust, is a striving betweene severall and distinct powers of the soule; but the striving that is between corruption and grace, is in one and the same faculty and power of the soule; the minde is carried against it selfe, the will against it selfe; and a man may know hee hath this striving in him, when hee doth not chely in his judgement disallow, but in heart dislike that sinne, to which hee is naturally most enclined. When a man hath in him, not only a checke of his conscience, but a true dislike in his heart of that sinne, which his heart before loved, liked, and was most enclined unto; when the heart is carried against its owne liking, then is there a striving between corruption and grace; for it must needs be a supernaturall power and worke of grace, that makes a man dislike that which nature most liketh. Hereby then try thy selfe; if thou find in thee this spirituall striving against sinne, then doubtlesse thou art regenerate; but if thy striving that

that is in thee, be onely betweene thy conscience, and thine appetite, lust, and affection; then certainly thou art yet in the dregs of nature, and art yet walking on in the way to hell, and so finding thy selfe; use all good meanes to hasten out of that fearefull condition.

When yet lived in them] Observe we that the Apostle saith, that the Colossians walked in the finnes before named [*when they lived in them*] when their naturall corruption (as a kinde of life) gave power for the practice of them.

Hence wee may plainly see, that it is the life of our naturall corruption that gives force to walke in sin. When our naturall corruption is lively and strong in us, then we breake out into many foule actuell sins and transgressions.

I hope this is a confessed truth; and for the use of it, we must know that the cause of all sinne is in our selves: our walking in sinne is from that life of corruption that is in our selves: Iam. 1. 14. *Every man is tempted, when hee is drawne away by his owne concupiscence.* It is folly for thee to say as some doe, (having run on in a course of sin a long time, and now haply being brought to some shame or punishment for it) woe to such a man, or such a woman, that ever I knew them: if I had not fallen into their company, I had never come to this: they might (indeed) bee an occasion of thy finnes, and their sinne was great in so doing; but thine owne corruption caused thee to bee overcome, and the cause of thy sinne resteth in thy selfe: and if we never saw ill example in our life, yet our owne hearts would teach us to sinne. When therefore thou doest bewaile thy sinne wherein thou hast walked, looke thou goe downe to the root of that, and all thy other finnes, thy naturall corruption, and bee humbled for that especially, as did David, Psalm. 51. when hee bewailed his adulterie and murder, verf. 5. hee went downe to the root, and said, *Behold, I was borne in iniquitie, and in sinne hath my mother conceived me.* Thus must wee doe in bewailing any knowne actuell sinne; for otherwise wee may bewaile our actuell knowne finnes, through selfe-love, feare of shame, or punishment, or the like, and so deceive our selves. Therefore remember thou (in bewailing thy actuell finnes) to goe downe to the cause of that, and all thy other finnes, thy naturall corruption, and bee chiefly humbled for that, and then no doubt thou shalt finde place to true repentance, even such repentance as goeth hand in hand with true faith, apprehending the merit of Christ his death for pardon of all thy finnes.

From these words a question may be moved, in that the Apostle saith, they walked in sin, when the life of corruption gave power and strength so to walke. The question may be, whether (after conversion, and effectuell calling) naturall corruption be altogether dead or no?

The Papists answer affirmatively, that it is; but the truth is, it is not: it receives a deadly wound at the first conversion and effectuell calling: but it still remaines and brings forth fruit till death, Rom. 6. 12. *Let not sinne reigne in your mortall body, that yee should obey it in the lusts thereof:* and the Lord will have a remnant of naturall corruption to be in the most regenerate till death: that the sense of that (with griefe and desire to be loosed from it) may put them in minde in what a miserable state they were when it was in full force in them: and so the spirituall life (they have gotten unto them in Christ) may be the sweeter, and that they may be stirred up to be more thankfull to God for the same.

Verf. 8. *But now put yet away even all these things, wrath, anger, maliciousnes, cursed speaking, filthy speaking out of your mouth.*

Our Apostle having exhorted the Colossians (as wee have heard) to the mortification of such finnes as did properly belong to their owne pleasures and profits, propounding that exhortation, verf. 5. and urging it by two reasons,

Dof. 4.

The life and strength of naturall corruption, is that which makes men walke in sinne.

Vse.

The cause therefore of all sinne is in our selves.

Quest

Answ.

Corruption of nature is not altogether dead in the regenerate, and why?

reasons, in the 6. and 7. verses. In this eighth verse he comes to exhort them to the mortifying and putting away of such sins as did tend to the hurt of others; and this exhortation is propounded, pressed, and amplified by the Apostle, in the 8. 9. 10. and 11. verses. That this 8. verse hath respect to that which went before, vers. 7. it is plaine by the first words of it [*But now*] and the respect and reference is of the present time, and state of the Colossians to fore-going time, and to their former condition; whereby the Apostle takes occasion to presse unto them his following exhortation, namely thus; that once in former times they walked in sinne, but now they ought to put it away.

In this verse considered by it selfe, wee have laid before us the Apostles exhortation, to put away sinne, generally propounded, and amplified by speciall mention of the Colossians, in these words [*put ye away*].

Then secondly, the Apostle comes to particular enumeration of some finnes which they were to put away, and hee reckons up six in number, five in this verse: *Wrath, anger, maliciousnesse, cursed speaking, filthy speaking.* And one other in vers. 9. (*Lying*) *Lie not one to another, &c.*

Come wee to the words of this verse: and first of the exhortation generally propounded in these words, (*But now put ye away even all these things.*)

Interpre-
tation

But now) In these words the Apostle (as wee have heard) hath respect to that which went before; and his meaning is this: but now being converted, truly called, and wrought on by the spirit of God: (*put away*) The originall word (used by the Apostle) hath many significations: it signifieth sometimes to lay up some thing to be used in times following, after the manner of the Apothecaries: sometimes for a time to suspend: sometimes to abdicate, to renounce, sometimes to put off, as wee doe our apparrell; and so it is translated, Ephel. chap. 4. vers. 22. sometimes to cast away, so rendered, Hebr. chap. 12. vers. 1. and many other significations there be of this word; but one signification it hath, that doth most fiely agree to this place, and to the purpose of the Apostle, and that is, to put aside, or to put cleane out of sight, as wee use to doe the bodies of dead men when wee burie them, and put them into their graves: to this the Apostle doth here allude, when hee saith (*put away*) coniuining to his similitude begun vers. 5. Mortifie your finnes, kill them; and then hee goes on and saith, put them aside cleane out of sight, as dead bodies are when they are buried; and so his meaning is, deale with your finnes, as you use to deale with the dead bodies of men, burie them, put them cleane out of your sight, have no more to doe with them than the living use to have with the dead. (*Yes also*) for so runnes the text in the originall (*But now put away, ye also*) that is, ye, as well as other true beleevers (*all those things*) Some render the words (as indeed they may) more generally (*all things*) howsoever they be translated, whether all things, or with limication, all these things, the meaning is, all finnes, or all finnes here specified.

Thus then we are to conceive these words (*But now put away, &c.*) as if the Apostle had said:

But now being converted and truly called, put away cleane out of sight, and deale you with all these finnes, as other true beleevers doe, burie them, have no more to doe with them, than the living have with the dead, let them be taken quite out of the way, let not any print or memorie of them remaine amongst you.

Now here first, wee are to marke that the Apostle urgeth his exhortation by the circumstance of time, and of the condition of the Colossians now converted, and now truly beleeving; that whereas before (when they were in their naturall condition) they walked in sin, now (being converted & beleeving in Christ) they ought to mortifie and to put away the sins, wherein before they walked:

walked; wee see then the Apostle makes effectuall calling, a ground whereon to build his exhortation: he held the *Colossians* truly converted, and effectually called and hereupon he doth exhort them to put away sinne.

Hence wee may gather a maine difference betweene such as are in their naturall condition, and such as are taken out of it, effectually called, and truly regenerate; the one sort walke on in sinne, and can doe nothing but hold on a continued course in sinne, but the other, they are enabled to stirre, and to move themselves to doe that which is truly good, and to mortifie, and to put away their owne finnes. Howsoever, Indeed, in the first act of conversion, and regeneration, men are meere passiv not able to move, or to doe any thing tending thereunto, yet in the course of holinesse (after true conversion) they are able to move and doe that which is truly good, and to avoid evill; for true faith wrought in the heart by the spirit of God, doth alter and change the heart and doth turne a man into a new creature, and conversation, as the holy Ghost saith, *Acts 15.9. Faith purifieth the heart*: and the heart once purified, the whole man is altered and changed.

And hereby then triethy selfe: if thou finde no alteration in thy selfe, but after long continuance of the use of the meanes of thy calling, thou art now the same thou wast heeretofore, and thou hast not yet any power to mortifie, and to put away thy old sinne; thou maist speake of faith, calling and conversion, but indeed thou art but an unprofitable babler, thou dost but misconster the Scripture, that speakes of faith, and calling, and interpret it after thine owne blinde reason, and foolish fancie; if thou bee effectually called, and truly regenerate, thou shalt finde thine heart cleane changed, and farre otherwise disposed than in former times: thou shalt finde that thou hast power to love that which before thou couldst not but hate, and to delight in that which before thou diddest abhorre, and to hate that which before thou couldst not but love; yea thou shalt finde thy soule set at liberty, and made able (though not perfectly, by reason of the reliques of originall corruption) yet in some measure truly to follow the will of God, and hereby trie and examine thy selfe.

Wee are in the next place to marke, that the Apostle useth this forme of speech (*put away*) as a further amplification of the dutie of mortification: hee thought it not sufficient to say mortifie your finnes, make them no more able to stirre and move than a dead man, but heere hee goes further, and saith, *put away your finnes, bury them*, put them cleane out of sight, have no more to doe with them than the living have with the dead: from this enlargement wee are plainly taught thus much.

That to the mortifying of sinne, wee must adde the buriall of sinne; or more plainly thus, wee must goe on from one degree of mortification to another, and never rest using meanes, till our finnes be truly mortified, and as it were a dead bodie buried, wee must never rest till wee bee sure that our sinne is truly mortified, as wee are sure that a man is truly dead when hee is buried; hence it is that true beleevers are said to bee baptized, not onely into the death of Christ, but to bee buried with him, *Rom. 6.3,4.* And this *Epist. chap. 2. 12.* the Apostle saith, there was wrought in the *Colossians* (by meanes of their conjunction with Christ) a spirituall death, and also a buriall with him; and this must every true beleever labour to find in himselfe, even such a true mortification of sinne, as that his sinne, is as it were buried, and put cleane out of his sight, and that hee hath no more to doe with it than a living bodie hath with the dead.

And herein many deceive themselves: they thinke themselves mortified and dead to sinne, because they abstaine from some sinne which they have heretofore used, yea they thinke they are truly mortified, humbled, and repentant for their finnes; if (as the Lord complaineth, *Isa. 58. 5.*) they afflict their soules for a day, and hang downe their heads as a bull rush, &c. If when they

Doctr. 1.

Such as are in their naturall condition hold on a course in sin and can doe nothing else: but such as are taken out of that condition can move themselves to doe good, and to mortifie, and to put away their owne sins

Vse

A ground of triall whether wee be effectually called, and have faith, or no.

Doctr. 2.

Wee must goe from one degree of mortification to another and never rest till our sin be truly mortified.

Vse.

Many deceive themselves in thinking they are mortified because they abstaine from some sin which formerly they have used.

they come to the Lords Table, they then put aside their sins for a time, though afterward they returne to their former vomis, and wallowing in the mire, as the Apostle speaks, 2 Pet. 2. 22. Thus doth the diuell delude many in the world; let us then know that it is no true repentance, to lay aside our sinnes for a time, and afterward to take them up againe, with as much pleasure as ever we did: they that so thinke are blinded by the diuell, and they deceive their own soules. Thou art not to thinke that thou art truly mortified, and dead to sinne, onely because thou dost abstaine from this, or that sinne which thou hast used before: a bare abstaining from sinne will not assure thee that thou art truly mortified: therein thou maist bee like one in a swoone or in a trance, that seems to bee dead, and yet is alive, and life comes againe and shewes it selfe.

Thou wilt say, but how shall I know, that I (abstaining from the sinne which I have heretofore used,) am indeede truly mortified?

I answer thee, thou shalt thus know it, remember this as a true note of mortification in abstaining from that sinne; if thou (having ability, and occasion offered for the practise of it) doe notwithstanding abstaine from it and that with a detestation of it, even because it is sinne, and displeasing to God, I say, if thou abstaine from it with an abhorring, and loathing of it, as the Apostle exhorts, Rom. 12. 9. (where the word used signifieth to hate with an extreme hatred, even as wee hate and detest hell) if thy abstaining from that sinne, bee with such detestation of it, then certainly thou art mortified, yea, then thou art come to a notable degree of mortification; therein thou art like to God himselfe, who not onely dislikes sinne, but hates and abhorres it: Proverbs. 16. Yea, it is worthy observation, that the Lord hates not onely sinne, but even the member that is made the instrument of sinne, as it followeth, vers. 17. 18. (but that by the way) It is an infallible character and signe of the true feare of God, if (having ability to practise sinne) thou doe abstaine from the sinne thou hast heretofore used, in hatred of it, because it is sinne, and displeasing to God: Prov. 8. 13. *The feare of the Lord is to hate evil.* Here by then trie thy selfe in thy abstaining from sinne: thou shalt find this a certaine rule, it will never deceive thee.

Observe wee further, that the Apostle saith, (*put away ye also*) that is, even yee beleiving *Colossians*, as well as other beleivers. The Apostle stirres up the *Colossians*, to doe as other true beleiving Christians did, to mortifie, and to put away sinne, as others did that were truly called.

Hence wee are put in minde of this dutie, that true Christians ought to doe that which belongs to all of that profession: it is the part of every true beleiver to bee conformable to other true beleivers in all things that pertaine to that holy profession and calling. There bee graces common to all Christians, as they are Christians, as knowledge, faith, hope, love, &c. and all these must bee found in every true beleiver in some measure: and there bee duties common to all Christians, as to deny themselves, to bee dead to sinne, to crucifie the flesh, to shew mutuall love to their brethren: and every true beleiver must be a doer of these in some measure, and it is common to all Christians patiently to beare any affliction laid upon them, for Christ and for the true profession of his Gospel, and thus the holy Ghost urgeth his exhortation: Heb. 12. 1. having gathered a cloud of witnesses, he concludes, *wherefore let us also cast away every thing that presseth down, and the sinne that hangeth so fast on.*

Herby I might stand to taxe and reprove such as will needs bee held true Christians, and yet are no more like true beleivers in their lives, than (as we use to say) an apple is like to an oyster: they will needs bee like the best in hope, they say they hope to bee saved, as well as the best; and yet they differ not in life and conversation from the worst, even from such as shall bee damned. But I desire rather to presse this duty on such as are indeed true professors of the Gospel.

Quest.

Ans.

Note.

Doctr. 3.

Every true beleiver ought to conform himselfe to other true beleivers in all things pertaining to his holy profession.

Use 1.

Reprooff of such as will bee held true Christians, and yet are nothing like them.

Le

Let them consider they are not to differ one from another, in doing or suffering things common to that holy profession: yet, they are to take heed they suffer not any sinne to cleave unto them, which they see other true beleivers have put away. Art thou proud and selfe-conceited, and seeest others humble and lowly? art thou covetous, and seeest other professors out of love with the things of this world? art thou cruell towards thy poore brethren, and seeest others of tender bowels and full of mercie? Oh let it shame thee, and bee stirred up by the example of others, that profess the Gospell, with thy self to put away thy sinne, suffer not any sin to cleave to thee, which thou seeest other true beleivers have mortified and put away from them: labour thou to be like them in all holinesse and godly conversation, set before thee the example of such as are most godly: *Paul* set his example before *Timothy*, 2 Tim. 3. 10. and endeavour thou to bee like them.

One thing yet remaines to be noted from these words, the Apostle saith (*all sinnes*) or (*all these sinnes*) the point is this.

We must put from us all sinnes, as *David* saith, Psal. 119. 101. *I have refrained my feete from every vill way.* *Herod* went so farre as hee did many things *Iohn* caught him, but still he would keepe his brothers wife: so many men haply put away covetousnesse, and yet retaine drunkennesse: some againe put away drunkennesse, and yet use swearing, or false dealing; others put away swearing, and yet keepe malice and slandering: every one almost will have his best pleasing sin: but we must know, that one knowne sinne is able to defile the whole life; one dead fyre marres the boxe of sweete oynment, Eccles. 10. 1. The divell will not much trouble us if he hold us entangled in any one sin, that is enough to draw us downe to hell, as a little leake in a ship not stopped, is enough in time to sinke the ship, and he that makes no conscience of one sinne, is guiltie of breaking the whole law, Iam. 2. 10. Therefore learne thou to make conscience of every sinne whatsoever, dispense not with any one, but be thou carefull to mortifie and put away every sin.

Come wee now to the Apostles particular enumeration, his reckoning up of the sinnes that are to bee put away, tending to the hurt of others, in the words following.

Wrath, Anger, Maliciousnesse, Cursed speaking, Filthy speaking, Lying. In this catalogue the Apostle reckons not up all that might have been remembred, but only some more common sins, and such as are most of all crosse and contrarie to brotherly love. The sins here reckoned up, are either inward, or outward. Inward, are the three first: *Wrath, Anger, Maliciousnesse.* And the other three are outward: *Cursed speaking, Filthy speaking, Lying.* And againe, the three first are sins against the sixth Commandement; and the three other, are partly against the sixth, and partly against the ninth Commandements. Of these sins as they lie in order.

The three first, *Wrath, Anger, Maliciousnesse*, are all sins under one head, they are inward breaches of the sixth Commandement. And touching these sinnes, I will first shew what they are, with the greatnesse of them.

Secondly, the meanes that are to be used for the putting of them away, with some application.

And then in the third place, come to some generall doctrine, offered from this verse.

Wrath By wrath in this place, wee are to understand the first sinfull motion of the heart, against another person, desiring revenge or punishment, stirred up by some offence committed. When a mans heart is stirred up against another, through injurie or wrong done, or supposed to be done, to desire revenge or punishment, then is there anger or wrath in his heart. And this (anger) or (wrath) may be thus described, it is a corrupt and sinfull desire of revenge, or

Use 2

A true beleever must not suffer any sin to cleave unto him, which he sees other true beleivers have put away from them.

Doctr. 2.

We must put from us all sin.

Use

Reproofe of such as put away one sinne and retaine another.

Interpre-
tation
What wrath is.

Difference of
anger and
wrath two-fold

Note.

When anger is
good, and when
it is not good.

The greatnesse
of this sinne.

Interpreta-
tion.

What fierie an-
ger is.

The greatnesse
of this sinne.

punishment in respect of some offence: and that wee misconceive it not, I will stand a while to make it more plain, by shewing a difference of anger and wrath.

First, wee must know that (*Anger*) is a naturall affection, it was planted in our first parents, in the first creation, yea, it was found in Christ himselfe who was without sinne, Mark. 3. 5. *he looked round about on them angrily*, and therefore anger is not in it selfe a sin, and alwaies sinfull.

Again, we must know that anger is sometimes lawfull and good, yea sometimes not only allowed, but required, as Eve should have beene angry with the serpent, and Adam with her, for tempting to sinne: and anger is then lawfull and good, when it is rightly conceived, and directed to a right object (namely) against sinne: for (as one saith well) he that is not angrie for sinne, either knowes not sinne, (or hates it not as hee ought) Anger therefore is lawfull, and good when it is rightly conceived, and directed to a right object, and that with due measure, according to the nature of the object: and this I might shew by many examples in Scripture, as of *Moses*, of *Phineas*, of *Elias*, *David*, *Nehemiah*, &c. yea, thus our Saviour shewed himselfe angry with *Peter*, when he called him divell, and said to him, *Get thee behinde me Satan*, Math. 16. 23. And by this we may easily conceive on the contrary, what anger is corrupt and sinfull, namely, such as is rash and hastily conceived without just cause, or on every trifling occasion, whereof our Saviour speaks, Math. 5. 22. *Whoever is angry with his brother unadvisedly: or (the cause being just and weightie) such anger as is directed amiss, as either against the person, or against the offence only: as it is an offence to man, as an injurie, and wrong bringing hurt and damage to men, and not as an offence to God, Dan. 3. 19. And lastly, such anger as doth exceed measure, and is not according to the nature of the object, but is as great for a small offence as for a greater, and is an excessive desire of revenge, troubling the minde, and making it forget duty to God, and men. For holy and good anger doth ever quicken and stirre up men to prayer, and other good duties. Moses was very angrie, Exod. 32. 19. yet hee prayed, ver. 31. 32. And good anger is ever joyned with compassion over them that have offended, and sorrow for their sin: so wee see that Christ was angry and sorry, Mar. 3. 5. and then doth anger exceed measure, when it so troubles the mind as men are put by these duties both to God, and to their brethren: we see then what corrupt and sinfull anger is.*

Now the greatnesse of this sinne may easily appeare: it is reckoned up among the workes of the flesh, Galat. 5. 20. it is evill in it selfe, and stirred up by the divell, it is the murder of the heart, such murder as the heart is able to commit: yea, it is the root and fountain of the murder of the tongue and hand: for it not only admitteth, and receiveth contention, and strife, as a march receiveth fire, but it stirres it up, and is as the bellows blowing the coales of contention. Prov. 16. 18. *An angry man stirreth up strife*, and of strife and contention comes murder, both of the tongue and hand, yea all manner of evill workes, Iam. 3. 16. Therefore, doubtlesse, corrupt wrath and anger is a great sin.

The second sin here named is (as the word is translated) (*anger*) but indeed this word doth not expresse the force of the original, the original word signifieth, a fierie anger, and it differs from the former only in degree: for this hot and fierie anger, is only a further degree of corrupt anger, and it is an inflammation of the heart, and the whole man; as when (through anger) the heart is heated, the blood enflamed, and the whole man (as it were) set on fire, shewing it selfe in countenance, as it were by sparkes of fire, flashing out of the eyes and nostrils, this also is a great sinne, and it must needs be so, in that it is a further degree of corrupt anger. But consider it in the effects, and wee shall finde it most odious, it is hurtfull even to a mans owne body many times, so inflaming the blood that it brings a fever: yea (some say) it being often and usually it drieth up and consumeth the radicall moisture, and causeth a consumption: but

but much more odious is it in the fearefull effects of it towards others: it makes a man dare to speake or doe, he cares not what, even to breake out into cursing, swearing, railing, reviling, &c. it is (as the fable) the drunkenesse of the minde: a man in time of such inflammation, hath no regard to himselfe or others, no nor to those whom he ought to respect: we may see it in *Jacobi* sonnes, *Simon* and *Judas*, Gen. 34. 30. in their heate they slew the *Shechemites* without regard of anything, they regarded not their fathers state in the land, and their owne in that countrey, that they were but strangers, and few in number, and that extreme danger might follow, both to their father, and to themselves. Fiery anger had so darkned their mindes, that reason could have no rule in them: for indeed (as one such well) reason to a minde incensed with anger, is like a key to a lock that is jumbled, it can doe no good: yea, this fiery anger makes a man haste to dishonour God, and to wound and kill both himselfe and others: therefore without question this is a great sin.

The third sin here set downe, is (*Multitudo saeva*) and this also is a sinne of the same kind with the former, it is an inward breach of the sixth Commandement, and it is yet a further degree of corrupt anger, it is old and inveterate anger, or continuing wrath, it is anger or wrath, kept close in the heart, cloaked and covered for a time, with purpose to doe hurt, and waiting for opportunitie to doe mischief: this was *Cain* anger against his brother *Abel*, Gen. 4. hee lapped up closely in his bosome, a conceived wrath and displeasure against his brother, and he covered it, and spake faire to him, verf. 8. Come, let us goe into the field, and when he had him there he slew him: and this also is a most odious and detestable sinne, not only because it is the daughter of such mothers, as *Wrath* and *Anger*, but because it is a going on in sin, and a sin coloured over for a time. Anger that cannot speake, is most wicked, but anger that can speake, and speake faire, and meane ill, that is wickednesse it selfe: and so wee see what those finnes are, and the greatnesse of them.

Now consider wee the speciall meanes that are to bee used for the mortifying and putting away of these finnes, the speciall meanes are these.

First, a serious and due consideration of our owne vilenesse and sin: for many strive against anger and wrath, and the more they strive, the more they fire, because they looke not into their owne hearts and lives, and they consider not their owne sins: and none are more violent, passionate and fiery against others that offend them, than such as are most carelesse in the consideration of their owne sins and offences against God: for the due consideration of our own vilenesse and sins, would coole our heat, and bee a notable meanes to turne the course of our anger against our selves for our sins, and to worke in us that indignation the Apostle commends, 2 Cor. 7. 11.

The second meanes is a due consideration of Gods providence, that nothing befalls us but by the providence of God, and (we being his children) nothing but that which shall turne to our good: and such as wrong us, are the instruments of his good providence, for the exercise and triall of our patience, and if we bee angry with them, surely, our anger goes higher, and reacheth up to God himselfe. This was *David* consideration, 2 Sam. 16. 10. 11. *Shimei* curseth because the Lord hath bidden him to curse; and this is a notable meanes for the mortifying of the foolish passion of anger.

The third meanes is, avoydance of all occasions of unlawfull anger, as contentions, and as much as wee can keeping our selves from the companie of contentious persons. Prov. 22. 24. *Make no friendship with an angry man, neither goe with the furious man*, from mistaking and misconstruing the words and actions of others, gaming, drunkennes, to whom is strife and quarrelling, &c. verf. 30. *even to them that tarry long at the wine, so them that goe to seeke mixt wine.*

The fourth meanes, and that most effectuall, is daily invocation of Gods name,

Note.

but not so
much as
in the
case of
the
first

What mali-
ciousness is.

The greames
of this sinne.

Note.

Meanes serving
for the morti-
fying of these
sins are foure.

1. Consideration
of our
owne
sinnes
and
offences
against
God.

2.

3.

4.

Prov. 23. 29.

5.

Most men and women are unmortified in respect of the forenamed sins

Eccles. 7. 11.

Two motives to stir us up to use the means in mortifying the forenamed finnes.

name, frequent and earnest prayer to the Lord, that hee of his mercie would vouchsafe, by his spirit to mortifie that corrupt and violent affection of unjust anger: for it is onely the spirit of God that must order and governe our hearts, and keepe us from rash and unjust anger: and so wee see the chiefe meanes that are to be used for the mortifying of these finnes. Now if due triall and examination be made of men and women touching these sins, it is to bee feared that the most will bee found such as are not mortified in respect of them. Are there not many persons that are easily provoked to anger at every trifling occasion for the moving of a straw in comparison? doe not many direct their anger against the person, and not against the sin, and if they be angry for the offence, is it not only as it is an offence to themselves, not as an offence to God? Let a servant neglect his duty, or do a thing crosse and untowardly whereby he brings damage to his master: and presently his master or mistris are angry with him, and mightily enraged, and they say they are angry for the fault of their servant: but let the same servant curse or sweare, breake the Sabbath, and then they are either nothing at all, or very little moved, and that is a plaine evidence they are angry for the offence, as it is an offence to themselves, and not as it is a sin against God. And is the number small of such as are incensed with anger, breaking out into cursing, swearing, raging, and most furious behaviour? and are there not many that suffer anger to lodge in their hearts, yea, doe they not cover it for a time, and when opportunitie serves, shew it forth? yea, some there bee that nothing will move to put away their conceived displeasure, no words, no deeds, no good, spoken, or done to them, can stirre them one jot: they will not suffer their malice to be overcome: such persons, they are worse than prophane *Esau*. Wee read that he was overcome by *Jacob*s kindnesse, and moved to lay aside his malice, Genes. 33. and wilt thou be worse than prophane *Esau*; a man noted for prophanenesse, and standing upon perpetuall record, Heb. 12. 16. for a prophane person? Then the conclusion will fall heavie on thee, prophane *Esau* shall rise up one day in judgement against thee, and condemne thee: thinke on it thou that art growne olde in thy malice, and wilt not bee appeased: and let those that finde themselves guiltie of these finnes (*Wrath, anger, maliciousnesse*) bee stirred up to a carefull use of the meanes that serve for the mortifying of them. It is said, *That rash anger resteth in the bosome of fooles*. It is an open proclamation of folly; such as are rashly angry, are fooles in print, and that in Gods booke. And consider wee further these two things.

First, wrathfull anger, and malice, lying in the heart, no good dutie can bee done to God, or men. Iam. 1. 19. *Be slow to wrath*, saith the Apostle, and marke his reason, vers. 20. *The wrath of man doth not accomplish the righteousness of God*: as if hee had said, In time of wrathfull anger thou canst doe nothing that is good, and pleasing to God. 1 Tim. 2. 8. *I will that men pray everywhere, lifting up pure hands without wrath or doubting*. The Apostle there gives us to understand, that if wrath be harboured in the heart, the hands lift up in prayer are not pure, they are defiled with blood, as it is, Isai. 1. 15, and our prayer is abominable to the Lord: and thus it is in all other parts of Gods worship, in our hearing of the Word, in receiving the Sacraments, &c.: we can doe nothing pleasing to God, and with comfort to our selves.

Secondly, consider that wrathfull anger, and malice, makes a man a vassall of Satan: yea, the divell chuseth an heart troubled with wrath to worke many mischiefs in. Wee read that *Saul* was a raging man, and the Lord sent an evill spirit upon him. And the Apostle to his exhortation, Ephes. 4. 16, *Let not the Sunne goe downe upon your wrath*, subjoynes, *Neither give place to the Divell*. As if hee had said, Give place to unjust anger, suffer it to lodge with thee, and then thou givest place to the divell, hee becomes thy bed-fellow, and thou art his slave: if then wee would not make our selves unfit to doe any good dutie,

duty, and utterly unmeet to serve God in any acceptable sort; and if wee would be loth to bring our selves in bondage to Satan, let us bee stirred up to use all good meanes, serving to mortifie rash, unjust anger, fierie heat, and malice. Let us often meditate on our owne vilenesse and sins, and duly consider Gods providence, that nothing comes unto us but by the good providence of God: and let us avoid all occasions of unjust anger, and pray unto God that hee would vouchsafe (by his good spirit) to order and governe our heart, and to keepe them from unjust anger; and then (no doubt) in time (by Gods blessing on those meanes used) wee shall be enabled to mortifie, and to put away from us, *wrath, anger, and maliciousnesse.*

Come we now to speake of some generall doctrine offered unto us from these words.

And first, in that the first motion of the heart desiring revenge, even rash anger, is to be mortified and put away from us, we may conclude,

That rash anger is not (as the Papists terme it) a veniall sinne, that is, a sinne (as some of their owne writers describe veniall) not deserving hell, nor binding men to be so sorry for it, but that it may be forgiven by knocking the breast, going into a Church, sprinkling of holy water, &c. but rash anger is a sinne in it selfe, and in its owne nature deserving eternall death; it is ranged by Christ himselfe (the best interpreter of the Law) under the sixth Commandement, as a breach of it, Matth. 5. 21. *Ye have heard that it was said to them of old, thou shalt not kill; for whosoever killeth, shall be culpable of iudgement: vers. 22. But I say unto you whosoever is angry with his brother unadvisedly, shall be culpable of iudgement: therefore it makes subject to the curse of God, and eternall death; according to that of the Apostle, Gal. 3. 10. Cursed is every man that continueth not in all things that are written in the Booke of the Law to doe them.*

But the Papists think they have sufficient ground for their conceit, from that text, Mat. 5. 22, because our Saviour saith onely in the last place, *Whosoever shall say foole, shall be worthy to be punished with hell fire.* See (say the Papists) he saith not, he that is angry with his brother unadvisedly, is worthy to bee punished with hell fire, but in the last place, whosoever shall call his brother foole: therefore hell fire is onely due to him that calls his brother foole; and so rash anger deserves not everlasting damnation.

I answer them, the purpose of Christ in that place was not to shew that onely the last sinne there mentioned, deserves eternall damnation, but that every one of these finnes deserves it, being a transgression of the Law of God, yet in a different degree: that is the purpose of Christ in that place, to shew the different degree of eternall punishment due to every of those finnes according to the different degrees of the finnes: and to this purpose he alludes to the formes of judgement amongst men, and especially amongst the Iewes. The meaning then of hell, onely in the last place, shewes not a divers kind of punishment from the rest, but a divers degree, that a greater degree of punishment belongs to the last sinne, than to the two former, and so that text makes nothing for upholding the opinion of the Papists.

Observe we further, that our Apostle speaking of these inward sins, Wrath, Anger, Maliciousnesse, hee puts them downe in order, as they goe one beyond another in degrees: as first, rash anger: secondly, hot and fiery anger: thirdly, maliciousnesse, inveterate anger, or continuing anger.

Hence onely note we thus much: that sinne creepeth into the heart by steps, and by degrees; it is the subtilty of Satan to convey sinne into the heart by little and little; he makes not men malicious at the first, but by his secret unmarked creeping into their hearts, he conveyes into them (haply) at the first, onely a conceit against such a person, and a mistaking of him; that mistaking having once entred, then hee hath gotten hold, and then hee makes them displeased, and

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Doctr. 5.

Rash anger is not a veniall sinne, that is, veniall in the Popish sense.

Objection.

Answer.

Doctr. 6.

Sinne creepeth into the heart by steps, and by degrees.

and rashly angry almost with every thing, said, or done, by the party disliked; yea shortly after to be incensed with anger, and even mad against the same party, and in the end (they meditating and musing on a conceived wrong done, or supposed to be done) he makes them purpose to doe a mischief, yea to take delight in so purposing, and to thinke it good for them so to doe: no doubt, malicious persons may easily observe that their malice hath bin begotten, brought forth, and growne to strength by these steps.

It is therefore the duty of every one of us to checke the course of Satan at the first, not to bee of an hasty spirit to bee angry, not to suffer our selves suddenly, and on every occasion to be stirred up to anger, lest the diuell get within us, and presse us on to a further degree.

It will be said, anger is a violent affection, and comes on a sudden, so that a man (especially being provoked by the wrath of others) cannot chuse but sometimes be moved to wrath againe.

To this I answer: we are therefore (when we are quiet, and out of our angry mood) often to call to mind, and to thinke of the meanes that serve for the mortifying of that hasty passion, and to add to them other holy meditations; and if at any time thou be overcome of anger, yet remember the counsell of the Apostle, Ephes. 4. 26. *Let not the Sun goe downe upon your wrath.* Let it not lodge with thee: deale in this case as a man that hath drunke poyson, that as hee will use meanes presently to cast it out, lest it spradd into his bowels, and infect all the parts of his body: so doe not thou suffer rash anger to rest in thy bosome, but use all good meanes with speed to be rid of it: and in this case doe as *Jehonathan* did, 1 Sam. 20. 34. depart from him, or them, with whom thou art angry, employ thy selfe some other way, about something thou canst bee most earnest, and thou shalt loone cease to be angry.

Now follow the outward finnes here reckoned up: *cursed speaking, filthy speaking, and lying.*

And of these in order, as they are laid downe by the Apostle. The first is *cursed speaking.*

I will first shew what is meant here by cursed speaking, and the greatnesse of that sinne with some application.

Secondly, the meanes that are to be used for the mortifying of it.

And then thirdly, come to some generall doctrine.

First therefore know, that the word here translated (*cursed speaking*) signifieth blasphemy, or evill speaking; which though it be commonly understood of speaking evill against God, yet it signifieth as well, evill speaking against men. We find the word so used, 1 Cor. 4. 13. *We are evill spoken of.* And so is it to be taken in this place as may appeare by the sins joyned with it, both going before and following after, being all of them against men.

Now this evill speaking against men may thus be described; it is a word, or speech, whereby the name or estimation of another is hurt, blemished, or obscured: or at least a word or speech, tending to the hurt and blemish of another.

And of this evill speaking there be two sorts.

The first is, in the parties absence, and that is *backbiting*, which is a speaking ill of another (in his absence) who is free from that ill: or speaking that ill, a man knowes by another, being absent, with hatred and with purpose to hurt him (as *Doeg* did of *David*) he told *Saul* no more than the truth, but it was with a purpose to hurt him, 1 Sam. 22. 9. 10. and therein was *Doeg* a back-biter, and this back-biting is a sinne against the ninth Commandement.

The other sort of evill speaking is in the parties presence, which is, reviling, railing, and giving vile termes to the parties face, (though this sometimes is in the parties absence) and this is a breach of the sixth Commandement. It is therefore cursed or evill speaking against men, when men speake any thing, that doth hurt,

Vse.
Our duty is
to checke the
course of Sa-
tan at the first.

Obj. 2.

Ans.

4
Interpre-
tion.

What evill
speaking is.

Two sorts of it
1

hurt, a d blemiſh, or tend to the hurt or blemiſh of the good name of others one, or more, either ſecretly in the parties abſence, or openly in his preſence to his face, by open railing, reviling, and hard termes; and yet wee muſt know that hard termes, may ſometimes be uſed, and not be curſed or evill ſpeaking: as when publike perſons, or governours uſe them, not in way of defamation, but in way of juſt reproofe: ſo the Apoſtle cald the Galathians fooliſh, Galat. 3. 1. our Saviour the two diſciples (*fooliſh*) Luk. 24. 25. and Herod, Fox, Luk. 13. 32. But hard termes uſed by private perſons, (ſuch as have no calling to paſſe their iudgment and cenſure on others for knowne evill) come within compaſſe of curſed and evill ſpeaking.

Now this ſinne of curſed ſpeaking, whether it be in ſecret back-biting, or in open reviling, or railing, is (without queſtion) a very great and grievous ſinne: for why? it ever iſſueth out of a corrupt heart; it comes out from an heart that is full of gall and bitterneſſe, even inveterate anger, malice, or envie, that is the root and mother of it; it makes worthy to be puniſhed with hell fire, as our Saviour hath taught moſt plainly, Matth. 5. 22. And if we looke upon it in the effects of it towards others, we ſhall finde it moſt hatefull. For hence it is that this ſinne of curſed ſpeaking is compared to a raſor that cuts moſt ſharply, Pſal. 52. 2. to the thruſting thorow of a ſword, Prov. 12. 18. to ſharpe arrowes ſhot by a mighty arme, to Juniper coales which burne moſt extreemly, and keepe fire very long, Pſal. 120. 4. And indeed, neither raſor, nor ſword, nor arrow, nor fire pierceſh ſo deepe, or wounds ſo incurable, as doth bitter and curſed ſpeaking; for beſides the hurt it doth to a mans good name (wherby ſometimes all his endeavours in his place and calling are made fruſtrate, or of ſmall effect) it many times ſo provoketh, as no ſmall miſchiefe comes of it, many men being better able to endure any wrong done againſt their perſon, or goods, than againſt their name; yea, the children of God can worſt of all beare reprochfull words, wherby wicked men ſeek to diſgrace them, and bring contempt on them: becauſe their good name is ever joyned with Gods glory; and if their good name bee impeached, they know ſo much is derogated from his glory; and therefore it muſt needs be confeſſed, that curſed ſpeaking (bringing forth ſuch foule and fearfull effects) is a great and grievous ſinne.

Now I deſire that this great and foule ſinne may be thought of, and that every one of us would learne to avoid it, and put it from us; for it is too manifeſt, that even this kinde alſo of curſed ſpeaking is amongſt us. What more common than tale-bearing, whiſpering, and back-biting? Are there not many whoſe mouthes are full of bitter and venomous ſpeeches? If they bee but a little croſſed, their mouthes runne over with all manner of railing and curſed ſpeaking, uttering ſuch termes as are not meet to be named: ſurely ſuch perſons feare not the ſentence of our Saviour, Matth. 5. 22. *Hee that calls his brother foole ſhall bee in danger of hell fire.* They many times give croſſe termes (as damned rogue, dogsface, and the like) it ſeemes hell fire is not hot enough for ſuch perſons, it muſt be made hotter: and certainly (without Gods great mercy) his curſe ſhall be doubled on ſuch. And are there not ſome who goe yet further? they breathe out curſed ſpeeches againſt others, and load them with vile termes, only becauſe they feare God, and make conſcience of their waies, even becauſe they heare the Word, and read the Scripture? And doe not many belch out moſt ſpitefull ſpeeches againſt them, and ſay, a young Saint, an old Divell, you will goe to heaven quicke, you are full of the ſpirit, the divell is within you, with a number of like divelliſh ſpeeches, fetcht from the bottomleſſe pit of hell. I take no pleaſure in remembering theſe things, I wiſh they that uſe them tooke as little; and I wiſh alſo that ſinne of curſed ſpeaking (and in that height of it I have ſpoken) were not amongſt men; but it is too evident, a man cannot paſſe the ſtreets, but he ſhall heare ſuch curſed ſpeeches.

And

Note.

The greatnes
of this ſinne.

Note.

This foule ſin
of curſed ſpea-
king is too
common a-
mongſt men.

Meanes that
serve for the
putting away
of this sinne
are three.

1

2

3

Two motives
stirring us up
to a carefull
use of these
meanes.

1

The divels
language.

2

Object.

Answer.

Bitternesse in
writing cannot
be justified,
though it be in
defence of
Gods cause.

And therefore now let us consider some meanes that serve for the putting away of this sinne. The speciall meanes serving to that purpose are these:

First, wee must labour for honest and good hearts, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh; and (as we have heard) cursed speaking comes from a corrupt heart: we must therefore labour to purge our hearts of malice and envie: and to that end thinke on the meanes before specified.

Secondly, we are to set a watch before our mouthes, and to cast (as it were) a bit or bridle upon them; and as *Iob* saith (recounting his uprightnesse) *Iob* 31. 30. *Suffer not our mouthes to sin by wishing a curse unto his soules*: and as *David* resolved with himselfe, *Psal.* 39. 1. *I thought I will take heed to my waies that I sinne not with my tongue.*

And the third meanes (which is that whereby these two become effectuell) is earnest and hearty prayer to God: for he alone it is that must take away evil out of our hearts, and tame the tongue, which (as *Iames* saith, 3. 8.) *no man can tame*: it is not in the power of man to tame it; we therefore must have recourse to the Lord, and entreat him that he would purge our hearts, and set a watch over our mouthes, that we may speake to his glory, and the good of men. And so we see the speciall meanes that serve for the mortifying of this sinne also. Let us be stirred up to a carefull use of them: and to that purpose consider we these two things.

First, all manner of ungodly and cursed speaking, is the divels language; the tongue that so speakes, is set on fire of hell, *Iam.* 3. 6. and it is an evidence, that the divell beares sway within, and sets the tongue on worke.

Secondly, consider that if thou revile the children of God, thou revilest the Spirit of God, *1 Pet.* 4. 14. and will the Lord suffer himselfe to be reviled in his children? no, no, assure thy selfe, such impiety cannot escape his punishing hand.

But say some, surely such as wrong us are not the children of God; they are such vile persons, as if we should rake hell, we could not find the like.

I would bee answered of thee (that thus pleadest for thy selfe) to this question; are they worse than the divell himselfe? haply thou wilt say, they are as bad; why yet heare what *Iude* hath taught thee in his Epistle, by the example of *Michael*, vers. 9. *Michael the Archangel*, when hee strove against the divell, and disputed about the body of *Moses*, durst not blame him with cursed speaking, but said, the Lord rebuke thee: durst not *Michael* revile the divell, and wilt thou revile thy brother? thinke upon it, and take heed what thou doest. And for conclusion of this, if wee would not make it cleare both to our selves and others, that wee are farre from being guided by the Spirit of Christ, and that our hearts are possessed of the divell, and our tongues his instruments, if we would not (haply) revile the spirit of God, and shoot out our arrows of bitter words against heaven, which must needs fall on our selves, and bring down the vengeance of God upon us, let us in the feare of God bee admonished to avoid cursed speaking: let us be stirred up to be earnest with the Lord, entreating him to purge our hearts, and to tame our tongues, and to bring them into order, that they may speake to his glory, and the good of our brethren. And though we be smitten with the tongue of others, and reviled, yet that wee may not returne rebuke for rebuke, but contrariwise blesse, knowing that we are thereunto called, that we should be heires of blessing, as the Apostle saith, *1 Pet.* 3. 9. that so we may have testimony and assurance to our owne soules, that wee are heires of heaven, and are within compasse of Gods blessing, and shall be blessed of him in this life, and with everlasting blessing at his right hand in heaven.

Now in that this sinne of cursed speaking is to bee mortified, and put away from us, being a great and grievous sinne, it followes by proportion, that cursed writing cannot bee justified and defended; and that cannot but bee a great sinne, if any man dip his pen in wormwood, and suffer it to drop down gall and bitternesse

bitternes in his writing; yea, though a man write in defence of Gods cause, and of religion, against notorious hereticks, though they revile him by their pens, yet he is to commit the injurie to God, and not to revile them againe, much lesse ought any man to doe it, in defending his owne private cause by writing.

Wee may hence, further collect and gather, that if cursed speaking either in secret, or openly, be a great sinne, and to bee put away; then (without question) much more is cursing, banning, and imprecation used against others, a great and grievous sinne. If to revile another, and to give hard reprochfull termes bee a great sinne, then much greater sinne is it to utter ill wishing against him (as many gracelesse persons doe) as that a vengeance, or mischief may light upon him: that must needs be a most grievous and fearefull sinne, and ought to be farre from all that professe Christ. And (that wee may see the ugliness of this sinne) know, that cursing of others is an abuse, and prophanation of an holy ordinance of God: for to curse is to pray against, and prayer ought not to bee used either to fulfill our lust on such as offend us, or for the hurt of any.

Again, by cursing men, they take on them the office of God, they step up into Gods chaire of judgement.

For first, they judge the party whom they curse, worthy punishment.

Secondly, they determine the punishment that shall befall him, and wish it may light upon him.

And further, hee that curseth another, goes about (as much as in him lies) to make the Lord partaker with him in his sinne; for hee being offended with the party, in a rage and violent passion desires the Lord to powre some judgement upon him, and would have the Lord so bend downe to satisfie his revengefull desire, which is a fearefull height of impiety.

Desire of revenge is wicked, but to use God in it, and as much as in thee is, to make him a party, or an executioner of thy rage, seeking and wishing that he may curse and plague where thou wilt, hee being all justice, all mercy, and all goodnesse in itselfe: Oh what an increase, and what a measure of sionne is that? thinke on it whosoever thou art, that either through weakenesse, yeelding to the rage of thy unbridled affections, or through deepe and dead security hast thy mouth opened to curse and ban, (which is a thing too common in the world) yea thinke on it seriously, that the cursing of others is a taking of Gods name in vaine; and then remember what is the state of such as take Gods name in vaine, even fearefull and damnable: they stand guilty before the judgement seat of God and the Lord (who only doth justifie and acquit his children) hath said, hee will not hold and account them guiltlesse; and if the Lord will not acquit and discharge thee from thy sin, who then shall be able to acquit and free thee from the damnation of hell, let it therefore settle and fixe into thy heart, what a fearefull and horrible sin it is to curse and ban, and learne to avoid it.

Come wee to the next outward sinne here named, namely, (*filthy speaking*) and in handling of this, I will first shew the sinne it selfe, and the greatness of it, with examination touching the same. Secondly, shee means that serve for the mortifying of it. And then deduce some further doctrine that will follow upon it, that this sinne is to be put away.

For the first of these, know we that this sin of filthy speaking may thus be generally conceived: It is a word or speech uttered, that becomes not Christian honesty: when men speake of things that may more blushing, in grosse and unseemly termes, that in generall is filthy speaking.

But more especially, filthy speaking (here intended and meant) is an obscene immodest, or unchast word, or speech: the Apostle here meaneth, such uncleane and filthy words, as are wont to proceed out of the mouthes of uncleane persons: and this the Apostle calles corruption, or rotten speech, Eph. 4. verf. 29. and

Doctrine 7.

Cursing and banning of others is a foule sin, and ought to be far from all that professe Christ.

Use

We are to consider how fearefull a sinne cursing is, & learn to avoid it

What filthy speaking is.

The greatnesse
of this sinne.

Reproofe of
such as are
guilty of this
sinne.

Meanes ser-
ving for the
mortification
of this sinne
are three.

1
Note.

2

3

Motives to stir
us up to a care-
full use of these
meanes.

and Ephes. 5. 4. hee reckons up obscenity or filthinesse, among things not be-
named; and this is a sinne against the seventh Commandement; and the great-
nesse of it may easily appeare to us thus. It is a breach of that Commandement,
not onely as a fruit of uncleannesse in such as use it, but also is an enticement and
a provocation to stirre up others to uncleannesse. And hence it is that the Apo-
stle in the place before cited, calles filthy speech, corrupt or rotten speech, com-
paring it to corrupt or rotten flesh, that not onely stinketh, and hath (haply)
wormes engendred in it selfe, but is poysonfull and hurtfull to all that come
neare it. And hence it is likewise, that the mouth (as in regard of all evill speech
generally) so of this especially is compared to a perverted mouth, Prov. 4. 24.
having (as it were) the upper lip standing where the nether lip should stand,
and contrariwise: yea, hence it is, that the mouth or throat is compared to an
open sepulchre, Rom. 3. 13. to an open grave, breathing and steaming up most
loathsome and filthy smells, and certainly the greatnesse of this sinne is notably
expressed, in that it is called corrupt speech; for that shewes it is extremely wic-
ked and sinfull. The holy Ghost commonly useth that manner of speaking, to
set out the exceeding greatnesse and foulness of sinne; as when men before
the flood were extremely wicked, and their lives stained with most foulesinnes,
then the holy Ghost, Gen. 6. 12. saith, *all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth*:
and thus the Lord speakes of his people, Zeph. 3. 7. *that they corrupted all their
workes*: signifying, that all were exceedingly wicked, therefore filthy speaking
being rotten and corrupt speech, we may conclude that it is most wicked and
abominable: and this we are to consider and thinke on: It is the fashion of the
world to make small account of this sinne; yea wicked persons oftentimes boast
of it, and make it the matter of their sport and merriment: and too many there
be that are delighted in ribald and filthy speaking; yea, they make it their re-
past and recreation, to utter wanton speeches, to tell filthy tales, and to sing
songs and sonnets, and ballads of love and lightnesse, and most abominable fil-
thinesse: yea, I may say to many in this respect, as Christ said to the Pharisees in
another case, Math. 12. 27. *even your children shall be wiser than you*. May not a man often heare it out of the mouthes of children, even filthy
speeches, uttered by the mouthes of children? and that is a plaine evidence, that
their parents (and others with whom they live) cannot wash their hands, and
cleere themselves of this sinne. Since then the hearts of many will tell them they
are guilty of this sinne, let us thinke on it, and consider the greatnesse of it, and
if we desire to be freed from it, consider wee the meanes that serve to that pur-
pose. The speciall meanes tending to the mortifying of this sinne, are in
effect the same with those, that serve for the mortifying of cursed speak-
ing 2, 28.

First, we are to labour for chaste hearts, that our hearts may bee chaste, and pur-
ged of all filthy and uncleane lusts. If the heart be uncleane, the tongue will bee
filthy: as a stinking breath argues rotten lunges, and filthy inwards; so filthy
rotten speech discovers a corrupt and rotten heart. It is but a vaine speech
of some, who say, though my speech be filthy, yet my heart is cleane: wee must
therefore labour by an holy feare of God, by sound and true delight in his word,
and by other good meanes to purge the heart of filthy lusts.

The second meanes is, to set a watch before our mouthes. *Job* was never silent,
yet made hee a covenant with his eyes, because hee being cleane in heart,
would give no occasion outwardly: so must we in respect of this sinne.

The third meanes is also prayer to God, that he would by his spirit purge our
hearts, and so order and governe our mouthes, that they may never bee soiled
with the dregs of filthy speaking.

Now to stirre us up to a carefull use of these meanes, besides the greatnesse of
this sinne (which no doubt is of waight to as many as feare God, to make con-
science

science of so great a sinne) consider wee what our Saviour saith. *Math. 12. 36. that of every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account at the day of judgement.* (that is) of every such word as brings no profit to men, nor honour to God, though it doe not directly dishonour God, or hurt men: and if of every such word men must bee accountable at the day of judgement, then certainly much more filthy words. If the trifler, and vaine babler (one that powres out words that bring no profit to himselfe, nor others) shall not bee able to stand before the judge of all the world at the day of judgement? where shall the filthy speaker (whose words have offended God, and as a pestilent breath, have brought much infection, and hurt to men) be able to appeare? yea, I may safely speak, to thee that art a filthy speaker, and dost delight in filthy speaking, in the words of Christ himselfe, *Math. 23. 33. how wilt thou escape the damnation of hell?* surely, without Gods unspeakable mercy thou shalt not escape it, therefore thinke on thy sinne, and make no tush at it, but now (while thou hast time) be humbled for that which is past, and be stirred up (in the feare of God) to use all good meanes that hereafter thou mayst bee enabled (through Gods blessing upon the means) to put away from thee all immodest, rotten, and filthy speaking.

Now in that this sinne of filthy speaking, or the speaking of filthinesse is a great sinne, wee may hence gather without question, the acting of filthinesse is much more a sinne: if to speake filthily bee a great sinne, then doubtlesse farre greater sinne is it to acte filthinesse, to represent and set it out, not onely by speech, but by gesture, and by conveyances and devices, as stage-players doe. For what are stage-players, but representations of the vices, and filthy sinnes of men in the world by speech and gesture? and therefore much are they to bee condemned, who make (or intend to make) their children stage-players: yea know it, that to make thy childe a stage-player, is to dedicate him to the divell, and to make him his instrument: and touching this, I will say no more than an ancient Divine saith: players behaviour polluteth all things, and of players hee saith, they are the feasts of Satan, and the inventions of the divell.

Come wee to the last words of this verse, (*out of your mouthes*) though these words may bee referred both to cursed and to filthy speaking, yet (as I take it) they have speciall relation to the latter of these, and therefore wee finde them added by the Apostle, *Ephes. 4. 29. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth.* The point hence offered is this.

That if filthinesse bee conceived in the heart, yet wee are not to suffer it to breake out of our mouthes: wee are indeed as much as is possible to keepe our hearts free from all uncleane conceits: but if they bee cast in by Satan, or arise from our owne corruption, wee are not to utter them with our mouthes in the hearing of others.

The reason is plaine, it is a further degree of sinne. To think ill is a sinne, but to utter that conceived ill, is a further degree of sinne. Much therefore are they to blame, who belch out what filthinesse soever comes in their minde, and being told of it, pleade for themselves, and say, I am a plaine fellow, I am no hypocrite, I cannot dissemble, I must needs speake what I thinke, as if a man were an hypocrite that yeelds obedience to the word of God. What wilt thou answer, when this injunction of the Apostle (*put away filthy speaking out of your mouthes*) shall bee laid before thee at the day of judgement? surely thou shalt then bee speechlesse, and have nothing to answer, thine owne conscience shall then condemne thee: therefore thinke on it, and remember the hurt that comes by filthy speaking, both to thy selfe and others. A filthy word is no sooner out of the mouth but it sends a stinke backe againe to thine owne heart, and makes it fowler than it was before, and many times it doth dangerously infect others, yea, sometimes it strikes such a deepe wound into the soule of another,

Rr

Dof. 1.

The acting of filthinesse (as stage-players doe) is a most fearefull sinne.

Vse.

Reproofe of them who make their children stage-players.

Object. 9.

Though the heart conceive filthinesse yet the mouth must not utter it.

Reasons.

Vse.

Reproofe of them who suffer their mouthes to utter what filthinesse soever they conceive in their mindes.

Note.

as no Phyſitian can heale, but only the holy Ghoſt, and no medicine can cure, but the blood of Ieſus Chriſt: and therefore if filthie conceits ariſe in thine heart, there ſtiſle them, ſuffer them not to breake out, and to bee uttered by thy mouth, leſt ſo thou kindle a greater fire of luſt, both in thine owne boſome, and in the hearts of others, and withall a greater fire of Gods vengeance, both againſt thy ſelfe and others.

Verſ. 9. Lye not one to another, ſeeing that yee have put off the old man with his workes.

In this verſe our Apoſtle addes the third outward ſinne that is to bee put away, namely, (*Lying*) and then having ended his enumeration of the ſinnes (that are to be put away) he goes on to preſſe his exhortation by waight of reaſon in the words following: (*Seeing that yee have put off the old man with his workes*) I will lay forth his argument when we come to the handling of thoſe words.

Now touching this ſinne of lying, I will firſt ſhew what it is, and the greatneſſe of it, with examination touching the ſame. And ſecondly, the meanes that are to be uſed for the mortification of it. And then come to ſome generall doctrine.

Fiſt therefore, for the ſinne it ſelfe. Know we that a lye is when a man ſpeakes an untruth wittingly, and willingly, and with a purpoſe to deceive: for there be three things that concur in the making of a lye.

Fiſt, that the thing ſpoken be falſe, and an untruth: that is the very matter of every lye.

Secondly, that he that ſpeakes it know it to be falſe, and yet notwithstanding willingly ſpeakes it. And herein wee are to obſerve a difference betweene ſpeaking an untruth and a lye: for a man may ſpeake an untruth, and yet not lye, as when he ſpeakes that which is falſe, but thinking it to bee true, though hee erre and be deceived, yet hee ſpeakes not againſt his knowledge, and ſo hee ſpeakes not a lye.

And the third thing in making of a lye is: that an untruth bee ſpoken with intention and purpoſe to deceive.

And theſe three things ever meet together in a lye. And ſo a lye is a voluntarie ſpeaking of that a man knowes to be falſe, with a minde and purpoſe to deceive: yet that wee miſconceive not this point, know that in ſpeaking ſome things, one word or one thing may be put for another, and yet no lye, as it is in Metaphors, and other figurative ſpeeches; yea ſometimes a thing ſuppoſed or fained, may be uttered, and yet no lye, as it is in the parables of holy Scripture, as that Iudg. 9. 8. of the trees conſerring together; and that 2 Sam. 12. propounded by *Nathan* to *David* of a rich man that had many ſheepe, and a poore man that had but one, and divers others: yea, ſometimes a man may ſpeake ſomething not contrary, but beſide, or divers from the truth, and yet not lye; as when parents would inſinuate to their children the hurt and danger of ſome place, as of a ditch or pit, they uſe to tell them there is a Beare, or a Bulbegger to keepe them from that place, and that is a thing ſpoken not contrary, but divers from the truth, and it is nothinge elſe but an expreſſing a conceived danger in other termes, in words of terrour and feare, to keepe their children from it, and this may be done without fault: for a lye, is ſpeaking of that which is falſe, and contrary to the truth willingly, and with an intention to deceive, and this is a ſinne againſt the ninth Commandement: and this may eaſily appeare unto us to bee a great ſinne.

Fiſt, for that the divell, the author of evil indifferently, is notwithstanding particularly called a lyar, and the author, or father of lyes, Ioh. 8. 44. as if in a ſpeciall

What the ſin
of lying is.

Three things
concurring in
the making of
a lye.

A difference
between ſpea-
king an un-
truth and a lie.

Note.

The greatneſſe
of this ſinne
appeares by
four things.

speciall and peculiar manner, lying, proceeded from the diuell.

Secondly, lying cannot be a sinne of ignorance, but of an higher nature, even of presumption: hee that lieth, sinnes not upon meere ignorance (of which nature many other sins are) but against his knowledge, and consequently against his conscience, if his conscience be not dead, and past feeling.

And thirdly, lying is a great sinne, in that it is not only hurtfull to men overtaken, and abused by it, but it also tends to the utter overthrow of all humane societie: for what comfort, or profitable societie can men have together, if truth in speaking be banished from it? How shall a man know what to looke for, or what to trust to, or otherwise, unless men speake the truth to one another?

And it is further a plaine evidence of the greatnesse of this sinne, in that when a man hath told a lye, yet hee would not seeme to have told it: and why so? Nature it selfe teacheth him, that to lye is evill, and a sinne full of infamie; yea, even swaggerers, and ruffians, such as make no conscience of any sinne, yet cannot endure to be charged with a lye: they hold it so odious, that a man that gives them the lye, hee must for it receive the stabbe: therefore doubtlesse, the sinne of lying is most odious, and hatefull both of God and men, though but meere naturall men, and yet lying, is a common sinne: and though every man bee loth to bee taken with a lye, yet it is a rare thing to finde a man that makes conscience of a lye. What more common with men in buying, and selling, and trading together, than the sinne of lying? I feare mee the most of our hearts will tell us, wee have many times this way faulted: have we not many times said, in selling of our commodities, it is good, yea very good, and no better to be had for money, when wee knew it was nought, and worth little or nothing? Yea, to a lye, have we not sometimes added an oath? which is most fearefull: and who is it (almost) that hath not bidden his servant to lye? as to say, such a thing stood him in so much, when it did not? or that hee was not in such a place, when hee knew to the contrarie? and what more common with servants, than to doe as *Gehazi* the servant of *Elise* did, 2 King. 5. verf. 25. to cloake and smooth over a fault with a lye, which indeed is to wound themselves by sinne, and then to seeke to the diuell for a medicine. No doubt I might yet instance in many other particulars: our owne hearts will tell us, that (amongst many other sins) we are guilty also of this sin of lying, and wee cannot cleere our selves of so foule a sin.

Now the speciall meanes that serve for the mortifying of this sinne, are these two.

First, wee are to labour to carrie in us, not onely a conscience of speaking the truth, but of speaking the truth without guile and without deceit: a conscience to speake the truth in our hearts, as the Psalmist saith, Psalm 51. 2. that is, in sinceritie, and in uprightnesse of heart: The Diuell may sometimes speake the truth, but never without guile: hee spake the truth to Christ, Matth. 4. 6. when hee said, *He will give his Angels charge over thee, and with their hands they shall lift thee up, lest at any time thou shouldest dash thy foot against a stone*: but it was guilefully delivered; a materiall part of the text was suppressed; and the rest perverted, to draw him to presumption. Therefore labour thou to carrie in thee, a conscience of speaking the truth, and that in truth of heart: if thou give so much way to thine owne corruption, as to speake the truth guilefully, thou wilt in the end not sticke to utter flat lies, and palpable untruths.

The second meanes is this, thou art to carrie in thee an hatred of lying, not onely in thy selfe, but in all other. It is made a note of a godly man, Prov. 13. 5. *That he hates lying words*, as wel in others, as he forbears to speake them himselfe: if thou favour lying in others, thou wilt soone come to like it in thy selfe, and therefore a notable way to keepe it from thee, is to hate it both in thy selfe,

Lying is a common sinne amongst men.

Two meanes serving for the mortifying of the sin of lying.

Note,

Motives stir-
ring us up to
the use of these
meanes.

1

2

3

not a story
- a sound dom
- a sign

Doct. 1.
All kinde of
lying is evil
and to be voi-
ded.
Lyes be of
three sorts.

347

Reason.

Note.

and in others: and remember to this purpose what the holy Ghost saith, Revel. 22. 15. that not only such as make lyes, but such as love them, shall be shut out of the heavenly Jerusalem.

Now to stir us up to a carefull use of these meanes, and to make conscience to put away from us this sinne of lying, besides this (that the reward of a liar is not to be believed when hee speaks the truth, common experience shewes it, that one being once found in a lye is hardly after that beleevd): besides this, consider we these things.

First, lying is a conformitie with the divell, nothing makes men more like to Satan than lying: lying is the devils mother-tongue, and when men lye they are most like to him, and it is a marke of the devils childe.

Secondly, every liar in respect of his lying is a loathsome person, yea abominable in the sight of God, the text is plaine: Prov. 6. 16, 17. Pro. 12. 22. *The lying lips are an abomination to the Lord.*

Last of all, consider wee among whom liars are ranked, and their grievous punishment: Revel. 12. 8. they are reckoned up with the fearefull, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and forcers, and Idolaters, and they must have their portion (with those their companions) in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. If then we would not make our selves most like to the divell, and bee marked for his children, if wee would not bee odious and abominable in Gods sight, and if wee would not make our selves liable to most grievous punishment in the bottomlesse pit of hell, with such as are most abominable; then let us in the feare of God bee humbled for that sin of lying (that hath been committed by us heretofore) and let us ever hereafter bee carefull to avoid it: let us carrie in us a conscience to speake the truth, and that in truth of heart, without fraud or guile; and let us hate lying, both in our selves, and in others, and let our hearts be taken up with a feare of God in his holy Commandment that forbids this sin of lying.

Come we now to such generall doctrine as is offered unto us from these words, (*Lye not one to another.*)

First, we are to marke that the Apostle speaks indefinitely, hee saith not, of this, or that kinde of lying, but indefinitely, and *lye not one to another.*

Hence we may conclude, that all kinde of lying is evil, and to bee avoided: and thus the Apostle speaks, Ephes. 4. 25. *Cast off lying, and speake truth every man unto his neighbour.* And for better conceiving of this conclusion, wee must know, that there are usually made three kindes of lyes.

First, a pernicious lie, which tendeth to the hurt of another, either in his life, or in his goods, or in his good name.

Secondly, a pleasant lye in merriment and sport.

Thirdly, an officious lye, when one tels a lye to doe another good, as to deliver him from danger, or the like.

Now, there is not any of these sorts of lying, but it is evil, and to be put away from us.

And the reason is this, every sort of lying is in its owne nature evil, and contrary to the truth, and bring evil in its owne nature, no circumstance, or respect whatsoever can make it good: a lye cannot be made good, though it have respect to the saving of mans life: a man may not lye for the saving of his life, or the life of another, no more than hee may commit adulterie, or doe any thing that is simply evil for the same purpose: no surely, a man is not to lye, for the gaining of another mans soule: though a Captaine under the Turke, nor yet a woman to the faith, might be delivered by a lye; yet in this case a man is not to lye to secure at libertie: the rule of the Apostle (Rom. 13. 8) stands firm, *that is* that which in its owne nature is evil, may never be done, what good soever may come on it.

Now

Now ſome objections are to be answered that are made againſt this doctrine, as,
 Firſt, it may bee ſaid, that actions or ſpeeches are to bee eſteemed good, or
 evil, in reſpect of their ends, as that is a good action, or ſpeech that tends to
 a good end; and on the contrary, that is a bad action, or ſpeech that tends to a
 bad end, and therefore ſome lie, as (namely) an officious lie made for a good end,
 may bee uſed.

Answer, Indeed actions, or ſpeeches civil and indifferent, are to bee eſteem-
 ed good or evil, in reſpect of their ends, but not any action or ſpeech in its
 owne nature good, or evil, not any action or ſpeech commanded, or forbidden
 in the morall Law of God; and ſo no lie can bee made good, in reſpect of a
 good end, being evil in its owne nature, and forbidden in the Law of God. It
 is a good ſpeech of *Auguſtine* to this purpoſe, ſay hee, there is no ſay ſo ill,
 but may bee defended, if it be conſidered not in its owne nature; but onely in
 the end to which it ſometimes tendeth; that which is moſt ill may ſometimes
 have reſpect to a good end, but the end makes not that good which is ill
 in it ſelfe.

Some may further ſay: Of two evils the leſſe is to be choſen. Now it may ſo
 fall out that a lye may be a leſſe evil than that which will follow on the telling
 of it: for example, a man by telling truth, may haply diſcover an innocent man
 that lies hid from another that ſeekes his life, and intends to kill him; and ſo he
 may become a meane of his murder: whereas if hee ſhould lie, and ſay hee
 knowes not where he is, he might hinder the one from murdering, and the o-
 ther from being murdered, and therefore it ſeemes, a lye (in ſuch a caſe) may
 be admitted.

Answer, that rule of two evils the leſſe is to be choſen, is to be underſtood
 of ſuch evils as are puniſhments, or inconvenient, not of ſuch evils as are
 finnes, no evil of finne is to be admired at all, neither will it ſtand good in the
 ſight of God to eſcape a greater ſin by doing a leſſe: there is no ſuch neceſſitie
 that a man ſhould commit finne, hee ought rather to chuſe to dye than to finne.
 That ſay of *Lot* which was of this nature, *Gen. 19. 8.* in offering his two daugh-
 ters to bee abuſed by the filthy *Sodomites*, though it were for the avoiding of a
 greater evil, yet it cannot bee juſtified, and in the example propounded, a man
 may avoide both lying, and the diſcovering of him that lies hid: for hee may
 either be ſilent, or ſay hee knowes where hee is, but he will not diſcover him,
 and this he is rather to doe, than to lye, or to diſcover him, though he doe there-
 by expoſe himſelfe to danger, through the rage of him that purſues his innocent
 brother.

It is further objected, wee read that many holy men in Scripture have lyed,
 as *Abraham*, *Jacob*, and many others, and therefore a man may ſometimes lye.

Answer, thoſe lyes of holy men are recorded in Scripture, not for approbati-
 on, and for our imitation that wee ſhould doe the like: but as their fallies and
 infirmities, and that their faults and ſlidings might be warnings to us: as *Auguſtine*
 ſaith, the fall of the ſtronger muſt be a warning to the weaker.

Oh, but the Midwives of Egypt ſaved the male children alive, *Exod. 1. 19.*
 and *Rahab* ſaved the ſpies, *Iosh. 2. 5.* by lying, and they are commended for
 ſo doing.

Answer againe, the things that they did are commended, not their manner
 of doing them; that which they did was a fruit of faith, and of the feare of God,
 but they failed in the manner of doing it, and their lying is not approved, that
 was their finne.

Haply ſome may ſay further ſay, how can faith, and the feare of God, and a ma-
 niſt finne, ſtand together?

Answer, faith, and the true feare of God, and a conſcience in any knowne
 finne cannot ſtand together, but faith, and the feare of God, and a maniſt finne

Objct.

Answer.

Objct. 2.

Ans.

Objct. 3.

Ans.

Objct. 4.

Ans.

Objct. 5.

Answer.

Wicked shifts
of Papists to
defend or to
extenuate the
sinne of lying.

The like shift
of the Familists

Vse.
Reprooffe of
such as use ly-
ing for their
owne advan-
tage.

Dott. 2.
It is most odi-
ous for one
Christian to
lie to another.

2 *Quest.*

Answer.

of frailtie may weell stand together: it remains then still a truth, that all kinde of lying is evill, and to be put away from us. I might bend the force of this doctrine against our adversaries the Papists, who teach, that every kinde of lye used in an oath is mortall sin; but out of an oath, they say, a pernicious lye only is mortall, and the officious and jesting lye, are veniall sinnes, that is, as they say, sinnes besides the Law of God, and not contrarie to it. And especially I might stand heere to shew the wickednesse of that new tricke of Equivocation, whereby the Iesuites thinke it lawfull to delude our Magistrates, being examined by them, with their ambiguous, and (indeed) lying answers. And such a tricke also that unreasonable sect of the Familie of Love hath taken up, they use so to winde away with obscure and intricate termes (when they are examined) that their heresie can hardly be found out by their confession: but I leave the further confutation of them to others that have done it to very good purpose. And consider wee, that no kinde of lying can bee defended, no, though it might bee for the saving of a mans life: and therefore (without question) that kinde of lye hath no excuse or defence, which is too common in the world, when men lye for their owne profit, and for their owne advantage and gaine. Men commonly thinke that that gaine is sweete, and comes easily in, that is gotten by lying: but alas, what sweetnesse, or what comfort can there bee in that gaine that brings Gods curse with it? will thy gaine (if it were the gaining of the whole world) be able to countervale the high displeasure of God, or the losse of his favour, together with the forfeiting of thine owne salvation? Oh thinke on it, and learne to make conscience of lying, though thereby thou mightest gaine never so much: yea, if the case so stand, that thou must either lye or lose thy life, rather suffer thy life to be taken from thee, and that by most cruell torments, than to lye, and so sinne against God: for what will it profite thee to prolong thy temporall life here, and hereafter to lose life eternall, and to hazard the state of thy soule forever? It is an excellent speech of *Augustine* (saith he) Thou wilt make a lye, lest thou shouldest dye: thou both lyest and dyest too: for while thou wouldest shunne one kinde of death (which thou maist deferre) but canst not take away, thou fallest into two: first, dying in thy soule, and then afterwards in thy body. And certainly so it is, therefore thinke on it, and consider it.

Observe we in the next place, that our Apostle saith not barely (*lys not*) put away lying, but he addes further (*lys not one to another*) and it is as if hee had said howsoever others are deceitfull in their words one to another, yet in any case doe not you (beleeving Colossians) use deceit, and lying one to another. From this amplification, we may further gather thus much.

That for one Christian to lye to another, is most odious: for beleevers and professors of the same faith, to lye one to another, that is a great and grievous sinne. and that this is the purpose of the Apostle, to teach this poynt by this addition, is cleere by his exhortation, Ephes. 4. 25. where hee saith, *cast off lying*, and doth not onely amplifie that by the contrary, *speake every man truth*, but he addes further, that here he doth (though in different termes) *unto his neighbour*: and this we finde added by the Lord himselfe, speaking by his Prophet, Zach. 8. 16. *These are the things that yee shall doe, speake yee the truth*, not onely speake ye the truth, but *speake yee every man the truth unto his neighbour*, it is then a cleere poynt, that it is a great and grievous sinne, for one Christian, and for one beleever to lye to another.

Now here two questions offer themselves to be discussed.

The first is this, whether it be lawfull to lye to an Infidell, or to one not professing the same truth with us.

Answer, no, it is not lawfull: it is not any respect either of person or profession that can qualifie a lye to make it lawfull.

Some

Some obj. & say, that the Apostle in that place, Ephes. 4. 25. useth this reason, why wee should cast off lying, because we are members one of another; now (say they) infidels, and such as are of different religion from us, are not members with us of the same body; therefore (it seemes) that to them we may lawfully use deceit and lying.

Ans. That reason of the Apostle must bee conceived as proper to beleevers, and professors of the Gospell, as binding them more strictly to speake truth one to another; but it will not follow that hereby they have liberty to lie to others: no, to lie is evill, and sinfull, to whomsoever it bee; but to lie to our brethren, professors of the same truth with us, being members of the same body, is more grievous than to lie to others: that is the meaning of the Apostle; and so his words make nothing for defence of lying to infidels, and to such as differ from us in religion.

The second question is this: whether it be lawfull sometimes to suppress the truth in part, and to conceale part of the truth one from another.

To this I answer, it is not only lawfull, but sometimes expedient to conceale part of the truth one from another, so as it be without fraud or deceit. It is never lawfull to lie one to another, because that is a negative Commandement and bindes at all times, and to all times; but the other, speake the truth one to another, is an affirmative commandement, and bindes indeed at all times, but not to all times: it may be lawfull and expedient sometimes to conceale part of the truth one from another, as sometimes charity requires that we cover a multitude of sins, 1 Pet. 4. 8. and the sins we our selves have committed in secret, it is lawfull and expedient to conceale one from another, and not to reveale them, unlesse it be at such times as they lye heavie on our consciences, and to such as may minister counsell, ease and comfort unto us; otherwise it is lawfull to conceale them from others, because no man ought to bring infamie upon himselfe, that is a greater sinned, than to bring infamie on others; as any crime a man commits against himselfe is more hainous, than the same crime against another. Many other particular cases I might lay downe, wherein it is lawfull and expedient to suppress and conceale the truth in part one from another.

But let this suffice for answer to these two questions.

Now for use of this doctrine delivered: is it so, that for Christians (beleevers and professors of the same truth) to lie one to another is a great sinne? Then farre be it from every one of us to use deceit and lying one to another. We hold our selves to be true beleevers, and wee make profession of the same faith: and shall we be found deceitfull, and liars one to another? surely then wee dishonour our profession; yea wee make it more than manifest, that we have no fellowship with God the Father of truth, nor with Christ his Sonne, who is truth, nor with the holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of Truth. Remember the Apostles reason, *cast off lying, for ye are members one of another*: true beleevers are members of that body whereof Christ is the head, who is truth it selfe, and in whose mouth no deceit was found, Isai. 53. 9. It is therefore monstrous to bee found liars under such an head; and is it lesse than monstrous, and dangerous too, for one member of the body to deceive another? certainly no: if the eye should deceive the foot should it not go wrong, both with it selfe, and with the whole body? and so is it in the mysticall body of Christ, if one member lie to another, and deceive another.

Let us then remember that we are members one of another; and therefore ought to love as the members of one body; and if there be true love in us, wee cannot lie, nor deceive one another.

Come we now to that which followeth in this verse (*seeing that ye have put off the old man with his workes*).

Our Apostle having ended his enumeration of the sinnes that are to bee put away,

Objection.

Ans.

2

Answer.

Note.

Use.

We that profess our selves Christians ought to be farre from using deceit and lying one to another.

away, in these words he goes on to presse his former exhortation, tending to mortification; and he doth here further urge the beleiving Colossians, to mortifie and put away (cleane out of sight) the finnes before named, by an argument taken from their regeneration begun, that seeing regeneration was begun in them, they should goe on in the same, and mortifie and put away their sins.

Now this regeneration begun, is laid forth by the Apostle in the parts of it, which are two.

The first he calls a putting off the old man, laid downe in this verse.

The second, a putting on of the new, vers. 10. which putting on of the new man, is further described in the words following, to the end of the eleventh verse.

Interpretation.

Come we to the words of this verse, wherein is expressed the first part of regeneration, or sanctification [*seeing that ye have put off*] the originall word is *ἀποδυεσθαι*, having put off; signifying, that the beleiving Colossians had already begun to put off the old man: and this phrase or forme of speech [*put off*] is metaphorical, it is borrowed from unclothing the body, from stripping off the apparell, to signifie the manner of putting away, and abolishing of the old man, that it is after the manner of putting off apparell. And by the old man in this place, we are to understand the corruption of nature derived from our first parents, which all of us have drawne from *Adam*, by naturall generation. It is usuall in Scripture to set out this corruption under the name of the old man, so calling it by the name of man, because it reacheth as farre as any power or part, as any faculty or ability of the soule or body of man, and then giving to it that epithete [*old*] because it is as old even as *Adam* himselfe (not his fall, and sucked out of his loynes. And because it is in us before the new man, we have it in us from our conception and birth, wee receive the new man afterward from Christ. [*with his works*] that is, with manifold actual transgressions proceeding from that corruption, both in heart and life. Thus then briefly conceive these words.

Seeing that yee have already begun to put away and to abolish the corruption of nature, spread over all the powers of your soules, and parts of your bodies, derived from the loynes of your first parents by naturall generation, with manifold actual transgressions, issuing and proceeding from them.

2. Quest.

I thinke it meet here to answer two questions.

The first is this: It may be demanded, when the Colossians begun to put away the corruption of nature?

Answer.

Answer. Even when they first beleived in Christ (for so it is with all true beleivers) so soone as they begin by faith to bee united to Christ, and to apply to themselves Christ crucified, they are partakers of that power of Christ, that sustained Christ on the Crosse, even the power of his Spirit, and that is effectual to abolish sin in them daily.

2. Quest.

The second question is, how farre forth the beleiving Colossians had abolished the corruption of nature?

Answer.

Answer. Though by the effectual power of the Spirit, they had abolished that corruption in all the powers of their soules, yet not wholly, but so, as there was a remainder of it in all and every faculty and power of their soules, which continued in them till death, though not imputed unto them. These two things well conceived, helpe much to the true understanding of the text.

Now first observe we the argument here used by the Apostle: hee brings an argument from regeneration, or sanctification begun, to urge the beleiving Colossians to put away wrath, anger, maliciousnesse, and other sins before reckoned up; that seeing they had already begun to put away the corruption of nature with the fruits of it, they should still goe on.

Doctrine 3.

Hence wee are plainly taught thus much: that sanctification, or regeneration begun,

begun, must be continued. If the worke of regeneration bee once begun in us, we must labour to continue it, and daily more and more to bee purged from sin, and daily more and more to be sanctified, yea, to feele the power of the spirit daily subduing pride, selfe-love, vain-glory, envie, covetousnesse, with a number of such like evill affections, that are deeply rooted in our nature: it is the exhortation of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 7. 1. *that we cleanse our selves from all filthinesse of the flesh and spirit, and grow up unto full holinesse, in the feare of God.* It is a point (no doubt) well knowne to us in speculation, that wee are to goe on from one degree of sanctification to another, from one measure of grace to another; and therefore I forbear to enlarge the point:

Yet we have need to be put in mind of it, and to be stirred up to the practice of it. To that end consider wee thus much; that if grace grow not in us, and if we goe not on from one measure of grace to another, certainly grace is not yet truly wrought in us.

Againe, howsoever the gift of regeneration: the Spirit of grace can never bee utterly extinguished and lost, yet wee falling away from the measure of grace received, we therewith lose the comfort of that grace, and the feeling of that joy we were wont to find in the same, and we cannot recover it without much sorrow and griefe of heart. Let us therefore remember the exhortation of the holy Ghost, Revel. 2. 2. *be that is holy, let him be more holy:* let us not content our selves with the beginnings of grace and holinesse, but labour to goe on in holinesse, expelling the same in good workes, which the Lord hath prepared for us to walke in; it will be a comfort to us in this life, and (through Gods mercy) it shall be rewarded with eternall glory in the life to come.

Come we to the words themselves, and therein first observe that phrase and forme of speech (*put off*) wherein the Apostle sets downe the manner of abolishing the corruption of nature, that it is after the manner of unclathing the body: we had the same forme of speech, chap. 2. 11. Whence wee noted, that the corruption of nature is not a substantiall thing, as some have imagined; nor a corruption of the substance of the soule, for then could not the soule bee immortal, nor Christ have taken mans nature without sinne: but it is a corruption cleaving to the faculties, powers, and affections of the soule, and such as may bee stripped off by the powerfull worke of the Spirit of God; this was manifested, and use made of it. Onely here take notice of one thing further, from this manner of speaking: in that the corruption of nature is as a garment intrapping the soule, as the apparell doth the body:

We are given to understand, that men unregenerate (and as yet in their natural corruption) are most odious and filthy persons in the sight of God: they appeare before him, in the vesture of filthinesse and corruption. Unregenerate persons, though their bodies be clad in filkes and velvets, and cloth of gold; yet in their soules there is nothing to bee seene but a most loathsome filthinesse; they are such as the Lord speakes of, Ezech. 16. 6. *polluted in their owne blood:* and no lazier, though as full of tores as Job, 3. 7. *from the sole of his foot, to the crowne of his head,* is as loathsome in mans sight, as an unregenerate person is, in respect of his naturall corruption in the sight of God: for in regard of that, the Lord cannot looke on him but be offended, it carries in it a guiltinesse of Gods wrath, as the Apostle saith, Ephes. 2. 5. Unregenerate persons are children of wrath, they have in them the image and stampe of Satan, so as the Lord cannot behold them but in wrath (in regard of their corruption.)

And this ought to stirre us up to consider, and to examine in what state wee stand, whether yet our soules be clothed in the lether coat of Adam, as Luther speakes, in the leprous and mortall garment of naturall corruption, or no; if our soules be yet clad in the filthy rags of nature, certainly (in respect of that) wee are most odious in the sight of God, howsoever our bodies are tricked and trimmed,

Sanctification or regeneration begun, must be continued.

Vjs.

Motives stirring us up to finde grace growing in us.

Doctrine 4.

Unregenerate persons are most odious and filthy in the sight of God.

Vjs.

A ground of examination and trial of our selves in respect of the corruption of nature.

med, yet we carry about the stampe of Gods wrath in our soules, and as at all times, this is to be thought on, so especially when wee come most neare to the presence of God (as it were) into his chamber of presence, as we doe when wee come to the publike worship of God: then wee come within compasse of the beauty of his face, Psalm. 27. 4. even before the bright shining face of the Lord, shining in his ordinances. If wee were to come into the presence of an earthly Prince, or some great man, we would doe as *Ioseph* did, Genes. 41. 14. when hee was to goe before *Pharaoh*, put off our old clothes. Wee know wee are careful to lay aside our old apparell, when wee come into the publike assembly on the Sabbath day, and not to come in our old clothes: and shall wee be so carefull in respect of the clothing of our bodies, and bee altogether carelesse in respect of the vesture of our soules? Shall we approach neare the glorious presence of God in our old rotten rags of nature? in our naturall blindnesse of mind, and hardnesse of heart? We may doe so for a time, but certainly at length the Lord will find us out, and say to us as it is, Mat. 22. 12. *Friend, how camest thou in hither, and hast not on a wedding garment?* How wast thou so bold to come in hither, so neare my glorious presence, in thy filthy rags? and we shall then be speechlesse, and not have a word to answer, and wee shall heare that heavey doome, *Bind him hand and foot, take him away, cast him into utter darknesse*: so assuredly the Lord will be glorified in all that come neare him, Levit. 10. vers. 3. either to their good and comfort, which thou canst not looke for, comming in thy corruption and sinne, or in their confusion. Therefore remember that thou labour by all good meanes to cleanse thine heart, and to sanctifie thy soule, and as much as possibly thou canst, to put off the corruption and filthinesse of it, when thou comest to compasse Gods altar, and to appeare before him in the publike assembly.

In the next place, observe wee: the Apostle sets downe the corruption of nature under the name of the old man, and so hee calles it in other places. Now hence I might stand to shew the extention, and greatnesse of the corruption of nature, that it is extended and spread over all the powers of the soule, and all the parts and members of the body, and therefore called the old man; signifying that a naturall man is nothing else, but as a man compounded of corruption, and that the corruption of nature is no light, and superficiall thing: but of these things wee have spoken, chap. 2. 11. Onely one thing further, I will hence observe, and that is this;

In that the corruption of nature is expresse under the name of the old man, we are given to know.

That it is not in us as a babe, it is no tender weak thing, as a little suckling, but it is tough, and strong, as a man growne in yeeres; yea, it is strong and powerfull, even in babes and sucklings, such as yet hang at their mothers breast, though it shew not forth the strength of it till afterward; and when it comes to exercise the force, it shewes it selfe no feeble and weak thing, but of exceeding great strength, carrying to sinne with a violent course, as any occasion is offered: yea, (if it bee not restrained) it carryeth to extreame outrage in sinne: and hence it is called the Law of sinne, Rom. 7. 23. because (as a Law) it doth exercise power over all the powers of the soule, and parts of the body: yea, originall corruption is so strong in us by nature, that it takes occasion (by that which should be a meanes to cure it) to break out, and to shew it selfe more violent, as the Apostle shewes in his owne example, Rom. 7. 8, 13.

Now then, this being so, that the corruption of nature is in us at the first, as tough, and strong as an old man: let us take heed we suffer it not to grow to a greater strength in us; for then a thousand to one wee shall never bee able to overcome it. And this we doe, if we suffer it to continue in full strength not abated by mortification: if thou use not the meanes to put off thy naturall blindness

Doctr. 4.
The corruption of nature is not in us as a babe, or as a tender weak thing, but it is strong and powerfull in us.

Vse.
We must take heed we suffer not our corruption to grow to a greater strength.

of minde, but still continue in it, thy mind will become more incapable of any good instruction. Doe not many aged persons finde this in themselves? Doe not they finde such a dulnesse of minde in them, that they sometimes utter it in plaine termes, and say, they are too old to learne; as much as to say, they are too old to be good, their blindnesse is become invincible; and is it not so in the naturall hardnesse of the heart? Is not that much increased (by continuance in the same) by the suggestion of Satan, by ill counsell, ill company, by custome of sin, and by the just judgement of God, so as the meanes of mollifying the word, and judgements of God, become meanes of further hardening? Too lamentable experience shewes this to be true, and therefore betimes grapple with that old man, thine owne corruption, and with speed use the meanes that serve for the mortification of it; labour to beleeve in Christ crucified, apply to thy soule the word of God, the sword of the Spirit, for the cutting downe of that corruption. If thou suffer it to continue in thee, thou joynest hands with the devill, and takest part with thine owne corruption, thy greatest enemies, and dost fortifie them against thy selfe, a thousand to one, to the utter overthrow of thine owne soule.

Wee finde heere further added, that the beleeving Colossians had begun to put off, together with the old man, his workes, that is, their manifold actuall sins issuing out from their naturall corruption.

Now in that actuall finnes are called *workes*, occasion is offered to examine, whether actuall sinne have a positive nature and being, or no? But that point is more fit for the schooles: onely know we thus much, that actuall sinne hath not a being as a creature, as a thing created of God, but onely as all other actions of men or Angels which have their being in the doing, and cease with the end of doing, and are no creatures.

Againe, in that the Apostle calles actuall finnes (*workes of the old man*) occasion is given to shew, that actuall sinne is a worke not proceeding from God as it is evill, but from our owne corruption, and from the divell; and therefore it is here called a worke of the old man, and in other places, the worke of the divell. Indeed in actuall sinne, the motion of the body or soule is from God, for in him we live, move, and have our being; but the evillnesse of that motion (by disposing and applying of it otherwise than wee ought) is from the corruption that is in us, stirred up by the divell, I will not further stand upon these points.

We are to marke that the Apostle doth conjoyne the putting off the old man and the putting off of his workes.

And hence wee may raise this conclusion, that the putting off the old man, and the putting off of his workes ever goe together, the abolishment of the corruption of nature, and the abolishment of the fruits of that corruption (namely, actuall finnes issuing out from thence) are undivided companions, they ever goe together, Ephes. 4. 22. Yea, looke in what measure the corruption of nature is abolished and put away, and (without doubt) the fruits of it are in like measure abolished. Hence it is, that the abolishing of the corruption of nature, is called a crucifying of the flesh, with the sinfull affections and lusts, Gal. 5. 24. and a crucifying of the old man, and a destruction of the body of sinne, together with a not serving of sin, and not giving the members as instruments unto sinne, Rom. 6. 6. 13. And hence it is, that true beleevers are said to be dead to sinne, the corruption of nature being (as it were) dead in them, and not bringing forth the actions of sinne, as it did when it was alive, and in full force and strength in them,

And this may serve as a ground of triall to every one. The corruption of nature it selfe is secret and hidden, and not so easily discerned, whether it be abolished or no, yet the workes of it are manifest, as the Apostle saith, Galat. 5. 19.

The

Doct. 5.

The abolishment of the corruption of nature, and of the fruits of it, ever goe together.

Use.

Triall whether the corruption of na-

ture be abolished or no?
Is by the fruit
of it.

The workes of the flesh are manifest: his meaning is, they are manifest, not onely to God, but even to men that have the light of reason, and naturall conscience; therefore by the workes of it try thy selfe, there is no better warrant to thy conscience, that the old man is put off: than when thou findest his workes stripped off. It is a sure token that the corruption of nature is wounded in thee, and hath received a deadly blow, when it breakes not out into those actual sinns it was wont in former times, thou having still strength, ability, opportunity, and means of committing the same; yea though thy corruption bee still working in thee, (as it will be till death) and sometimes prevaile in bringing forth of sinne; yet it is a sure argument that it is wounded in thee, when thou goest untowardly, and like a bungler about sinne, and (as the Apostle saith, Rom. 7. 15.) dost not allow, but hate that thou dost: but on the contrary, if the workes of the old man bee found in thee, those manifest workes the Apostle reckons up, *Gal. 5. 19. adultery, fornication, uncleannesse, wantonnesse, &c.* or the like: if there bee (as the Apostle here speaks) *wrath, anger, maliciousnesse* in thy heart: *curst speaking, filthy speaking, lying*, in thy mouth.

And if thou commit any sinne with pleasure, certainly the old man is yet lively in thee, and is in full force and strength in thee, and thou art yet in the gall of bitterness, and the band of iniquity; therefore deceive not thy selfe; remember that the putting off the old man, and the putting off of his workes, ever goe together; put off the one, and put off the other; hold on the workes of the old man, and the old man is not put off; if thy life be defiled with sinne, certainly thy heart is not cleare.

Verf. 10. *And have put on the new, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.*

Come we to the tenth verse, where the Apostle layeth forth the other part of regeneration, or sanctification begun in the Colossians, in the first words of it: (*And have put on the new.*)

Interpreta-
tion.

The understanding of the former words, will lead us to the meaning of these: for heere the Apostle doth still continue his metaphoricall speech begun in the verse before, (*put on*) this phrase is taken from clothing the body, from putting on of a garment: and to put on a garment (we know) is to cover the body with it, and to apply it to the body: so that hereby is meant, that the beleiving Colossians had begun to cover themselves with the new man, and as neerly to apply him to themselves as a garment; By *the new man*, wee are to understand that which is contrary to the old man, namely, the image of God renewed in true beleivers, as the Apostle here expounds himselfe in the words following (*which is renewed*) that is, that new quality of inherent holinesse that is wrought by the spirit of Christ in all his members, which is therefore called.

First, by the name of man, because it also reacheth as far as any power or part of soule or body.

And againe, it is called the new man, because we have it not by naturall birth but new birth, by regeneration afterward from Christ.

Thus then we are to conceive these words (*and have put on the new*) as if the Apostle had said, And have begun to cover, and to apply to your selves as a garment, the image of God, even that new quality of inherent holinesse, that is wrought by the Spirit of Christ in all his members, both in their soules and bodies. The Papists would force out of this text, that the justice, or righteousness by which we stand just in the sight of God, is a very quality and forme inherent in the soule adorning the same, and not onely Christ his righteousness imputed to true beleivers: this is their note on this place, but it is most absurd; it is cleane besides the purpose of the Apostle: hee heere treats not at all of justification, either

A note of the
Papists wre-
sted from this
text.

either in the sight of God, or men, but only speaks of regeneration, or sanctification, setting that out in the parts of it: his speech drives not at all to justification, it seemes they are driven to hard shifts when they seeke to wrest this, and like places to favour their devise.

Observe wee here that the Apostle speaking of the regeneration, or sanctification of the beleiving Colossians, he sets it forth in these two branches.

First, a putting off the old man.

Secondly, and a putting on of the new.

Hence wee are taught thus much, that true regeneration, or sanctification standeth in these two things.

First, in abolishing the power of nature in all the powers of the soule, and in all the members of the body,

Secondly a renovation of them according to the Image of God.

And this wee may finde also, plainly taught by the Apostle: Ephes. 4. 22, 23, 24. *That ye cast off concerning the conversation in time past) the old man which is corrupt through the deceiverable lusts, and bee renewed in the spirit of the minde, and put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.* For (indeed) these are the second essentiall parts of regeneration, or sanctification; mortification of the naturall corruption, and a vivification, or quickning by grace; and howsoever these two may bee distinguished one from the other, yet they are never to be separated, and put asunder: if either of these two bee wanting, there is no true regeneration, or sanctification.

And therefore deceive not thy selfe in respect of this excellent, and necessary duty of regeneration, or sanctification: it is not enough for thee to put off the old man, but thou must also put on the new, it is not sufficient to mortifie the flesh, but thou must also bee quickened in the Spirit.

Haply some will say, this is a needlesse exhortation: for if the corruption of nature bee truly mortified, that mortification is wrought by the spirit of God, and if the spirit have once wrought that, hee also will renew in holiness after the image of God.

Indeede it is true if the spirit have beene effectually, to the putting off of the old man in any, hee will also bee effectually in him to the putting on of the new; yet some deceive themselves in respect of putting off of the old man, they think the spirit of God hath been effectually in them, to the putting off of the old man, when indeed it is not so, as when their corruption of nature is onely limited, or kept in by restraining grace, they are not naturally disposed, or inclined to some enormous sinne, they have beene civilly trained up, and so they are brought to a kind of harmelesse, and civility; and therein they please themselves, as if the spirit of God had beene effectually in them to the putting off of the old man: to such is my exhortation directed, and wee are every one of us to take heed of this deceit, for this indeed is to deceive our owne soules. If thou wouldest bee sure, that the spirit of God hath wrought in thee an abolishment, or a wounding of thy naturall corruption, then looke thou finde in thee an answerable measure of holiness, that is an infallible note that the spirit of God hath wrought in thee to the putting off of the old man, and that thou art truly regenerate, and sanctified: Doe not thou therefore content thy selfe with thy abstaining from grosse sinnes, or with thy harmelesse disposition, and therein blesse thy selfe; but if thou wouldest have the comfort of true sanctification sealed up to thine owne soule, then never rest till thou find a new quality of grace and holiness wrought in thee, and remember the words of the Holy Ghost, Hebrewes. 12. 14. *Without holiness thou shalt never see God, so thy comfort.*

The next thing, we are to marke, is the phrase here used by the Apostle (*put on*) whereby hee doth intimate unto us that inherent holiness wrought in true

Doctrine 1.

True sanctification stands both in abolishing the corruption of nature, and also in a renovation according to Gods image.

Note.

Use

Wee must bee carefull to joyne mortification and vivification together.

Obiect.

Answer.

Doff. 2.
Such as are
clad with the
habit of inher-
ent holiness
are glorious
in Gods fight.

Use.
We are to bee
stirred up to a
speciall care of
inward holi-
ness.

Doff. 3.
True sanctifi-
cation is found
in all the pow-
ers of the soule
Use.
Wee are not
to thinke our
selves sancti-
fied because
wee are en-
lightened.

believers, is as a goodly garment or glorious ornament, and being as a garment it is not essentiall, as some have imagined, (but that only by the way) hence wee may gather.

That such as have put on the new man, such as are clad with the habit of inherent holiness, are glorious in the sight of God: they are seene of him apparelled with that which is indeed gracious and pleasing in his sight: and though it be somewhat spotted by the flesh, as the best inherent holiness is, yet it is accepted of him in his sonne: and that they are thus glorious the Apostle Peter hath made it most plaine, 1 Pet. 4. 14. hee there saith, *that the spirit of glory resteth on them*, how then should they not be most glorious? and the Prophet Isay speaking of them saith, Isay. 4. 5. *that upon all the glory shall bee a defence*, and thus also the Lord himselfe speaks of his people, Isay 43. 4. *thou wast precious in my fight and honourable*.

Now the consideration of this ought to stirre us up to a speciall care of inward holiness, that our soules may bee invested with the new man, with the grace of sanctification, that so the eye of the Lord may bee pleased in looking on us, and wee accepted through his sonne in his sight. It is the fashion of too many in the world, to spend much time, and to take great paines in trimming up the body, yea some are afraid of nothing more than of inward grace and holiness, because it would crosse their pride, and forbid the nice dames of this age to make idols of their bodies, and to bestow so much time in tricking themselves with pranking and painting: they thinke not on that exhortation of the Apostle, 1 Pet. 3. 4. but let us thinke on it, and remember it, that it is the hid man of the heart, that it is a thing much set by before God, and let us take paines for that: and know it is not either strength of body, eloquence of tongue, sharpnesse of wit, beaurty of face, or any other externall thing, or common gift of God, that is pleasing unto him, unlesse it be sanctified. I labour therefore for holiness and sanctification, that gives an honour to all inferiour gifts, and by that through Christ thou maist appeare glorious, and most pleasing in the sight of the highest Majesty, whom thou shouldest seeke to please above all the world.

Note one thing further; In that the Apostle sets out inward sanctification to bee a putting on of the new man, wee may conclude,

That true sanctification is entire, it is in all the powers of the soule, it is a putting on of a perfect whole man with all his parts: and indeed, if the spirit worke powerfully in us, hee workes on all the powers of the soule; sanctifying grace is never effectually in one faculty, and not in another.

Therefore let no man thinke that hee is truly sanctified, because (haply) hee is enlightened, and hath a knowledge of the mysteries of the Gospell, when notwithstanding hee is carried away with some inordinate lust and affection. *Isidore* was a man that had great knowledge, no question Christ taught him many good things, and hee taught others, yet was hee a man unsanctified: therefore deceive not thy selfe, and remember that true sanctification is entire, even of all the powers of the soule, and is in every part and member of the body.

Now come we to the words following (*which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him*). Our Apostle having layd forth the second part of regeneration, or sanctification begunne in this life, to bee a putting on of the new man: in these words, hee goes on further to describe the new man, and his description is continued to the end of the next verse.

In that part of the description of the new man (that is expressed in the words of this verse) wee have these things laid before us:

1 First, the generall frame, or making of the new man, that hee is a man renewed.

2 Secondly, wherein that renovation, or new making (more specially) consisteth, namely, in knowledge.

And

And thirdly, after what forme or fashion, in what manner hee is renewed in knowledge, and that is after the image of God, who is here set out to bee the creator of him: wherein is also implied what kinde of renovation it is: that it is a recreation, even a new creation.

Wee must stand a while to open the meaning of the words (*which*) that is, which new man (*renewed*) the Apostle here speaks of the time present, signifying a continuall action, as if hee had said, which is begun to be renewed, and is daily more and more renewed. Now the word (both the originall, and the English word) (*renued*) signifie (as wee know) to make a thing new againe, to restore a thing (antiquated and deformed) to the ancient forme and beautie; and heerein the Apostle had an eye to that created holinesse, that was in man before his fall: and so his meaning is, which new man is restored to his ancient forme and beautie, which hee had in the state of innocencie before the fall (*in knowledge*) or into knowledge. The word here translated (*knowledge*) doth properly signifie acknowledgement: and so the Apostles meaning is into an acknowledgement, or into an effectuall knowledge of God, of his will revealed, and of that which is to bee knowne and acknowledged of true believers. *After the image of him that created him*, (that is) after the image of God. And for the better understanding of these words, we must know that the image of God in man (generally taken) is a conformitie or likenesse of man to God, as *Moses* brings in the Lord speaking, Gen. 1. 26. *Let us make man in our image according to our likeness.* And conformitie or likenesse to God, stands in two things.

First, in Happinesse.

Secondly, in Holinesse.

The first of those is not here meant, but onely the second: for so the Apostle teacheth plainly, Ephes. 4. 24. *Put on the new man, which after God* (that is) in Gods image is created in righteousness, and true holinesse: so then this is the meaning of the Apostle, that the new man is renewed in such manner as is effectuall to a conformitie or likeness with God in holinesse (*that created him*) Those words intimate thus much: that the new man is a new creature of God. Thus then wee are to conceive these words (which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.) As if the Apostle had said: Which new man is daily restored to his ancient forme and beautie, even into an acknowledgement of God, of his will revealed, and of that which is to bee knowne and acknowledged of every true believer, yea into a knowledge in such manner as is effectuall to a conformitie or likenesse with God in holinesse, which new man the Lord hath framed in you as a new creature.

We are here in the first place to mark, that the Apostle in describing the new man, saith, he is a man severed, a man made new again: giving us to understand, that the new man here spoken of (that is) the quality of inherent holinesse, or the image of God, is not now simply new, but was once made before, and was in man once before, as it was indeede in the first creation: and that being once made, and once in man before it was lost, as it was by the fall of man: these are things agreed upon, even betweene us and the Papists, though they dissent from us in the manner of the being of Gods image in *Adam*, and say, it was in him meerely a supernaturall gift, and wee on the contrary, a naturall gift. I will not dispute that question, but rather answer another question arising from hence: in that the image of God was once in man, but lost by the fall of man, it may be demanded;

How farre forth the image of God touching holinesse, was lost by the fall of *Adam*.

Answer, the image of God (in respect of true knowledge and holinesse) was utterly lost, yet some shadow of it is still remaining: there is a remnant of knowledge in the minde of man, there is a light of nature, and certaine generall notions

Interpretation.

Inherent holinesse of Gods image now in man was in man once before and is now renewed in him.

Quest.

Answer. Some shadow of Gods Image is still remaining in man.

tions of God, as that there is a God, and that he is a punisher of evil doers, and certaine notions of good and evil, right and wrong, equitie and truth: the Apostle saith, Rom. 1. 19. 20. that the Heathen came to know Gods eternall power and God-head by consideration of the creatures: their understanding did gather by the sight of the creatures, that there was a God, and a powerfull God: there is also a remnant of Gods image in the will and conscience of man, the Apostle saith also, Rom. 2. 15. *The Gentiles did shew the effect of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts accusing one another, or excusing.* So then there is a remainder of the image of God in man, yet that is not able to make man holy, no not in part: it is like to a dead child, wherein haply a man may discern the likenesse of the father, yet it is but a loathsome rotten carcasle: so it is in the image of God remaining in man, it is only left as a monument of that image that once was in man, and to leave men without excuse, Rom. 1. 20.

Vse.

There is in every man by nature sufficient knowledge to leave him without excuse and to condemn him.

And therefore let this be the use we make of it: let us learne that there is in all of us by nature sufficient knowledge, though not to make holy, and to save us, yet to leave us without excuse, and to condemne us. Doe not thou thinke it will stand for a good plea at the day of judgement, that thou never knewest letter, that (which many ignorant persons now pleade for themselves, to excuse their grosse and wilfull ignorance, that (forsooth) they are not booke-learned) will not then stand them in stead: no, no, thou hast knowledge enough within thee to leave thee inexcusable, at the day of judgement: and then (to make thy damnation just) the Lord will not then hold thee excused for thine ignorance. There is left in thee a light of nature sufficient to condemne thee; yea, thou living in the bosome of the Church, and under the meanes of further enlightning, and thou not profiting (by the meanes) to thy illumination, and to the renovation of the image of God in thy minde in some measure, but going on in thy blindness and ignorance, surely the more just, and the deeper shall bee thy condemnation.

The next thing wee are to marke is this, that the Apostle saith, the new man is a man renewed in knowledge: that the new man is a man restored to his ancient forme and beaurie, first in knowledge. Hence wee may take up this conclusion:

Dott. 5.

Illumination of the mind is the first thing that is wrought in them that are truly renewed according to Gods image.

That the first thing wrought in such as are truly renewed by the spirit of God, is illumination of minde, in renovation according to the image of God. The spirit of God doth first enlighten the minde, and endue the minde with knowledge of God, of his will, and of all things that ought to bee knowne: Romans 12. 2. Our Apostle perswading the Romans to a transformation and change, he doth instance in this, that (principally) they should be renewed in their mindes, *be changed by the renewing of your mindes*: and so likewise Ephes. 4. having bidden the Ephesians cast off the old man: vers. 23. he saith, *and be renewed in the spirit of your mindes.*

The reason of this (that in our renovation, the spirit doth first enlighten the minde is plaine.

Namely this: because illumination of the minde with true knowledge of God, of his will, and of things that ought to bee knowne, is the beginning of all the rest of mans holinesse: and according to the measure of renewed knowledge, there followes a measure of holinesse in all the faculties of the soule, and in the whole man.

Vse.

Where there is no knowledge of God, nor of things needfull to bee knowne, there is no true holinesse.

And let this be thought on, to this purpose: Is it so that illumination, enlightning of the minde with true knowledge, is the first worke of the spirit, in such as are renewed? certainly then where there is not knowledge of God, and of his will revealed, and of things needfull to bee knowne in some measure, there is no new man, no spirit, but onely the old man, and the flesh which can not

not enter into Gods kingdome, where there is no knowledge, but blindnesse and ignorance, there is no dram of true holinesse. Ignorant persons may say (as they use to doe, and sooth up themselves, and stand at defiance with them that shall charge them to the contrary) that they love God, they trust in him, and they feare him: but indeed they have none of these things in them: it is not possible that a man should love or feare God, or have true hope and confidence in him, who knowes him not in mercie, love, goodnesse, truth, power, justice, and in the rest of his attributes. These two things follow close one upon another, and ever goe together: First, an ignorant minde: And secondly a sinfull heart.

And certainly, a man without knowledge, is ever a man without grace: I have warrant from the Apostle so to speake, hee hath coupled them together, Ephes. 4. 18. *strangers from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them:* Ignorance makes men strangers from the life of God: ignorant persons have no manner of spirituall life in them, let then the Papists magnifie ignorance as a mother of devotion, but let us know, that to be in ignorance, is a gracelesse condition, and let it cause as many as finde themselves in that state, to hasten out of it, it is a fearefull condiction that ignorant persons are in. Dost thou not yet know God, as he hath made himselfe known in his word? art thou not acquainted with his properties, with his actions and attributes, as with his truth, justice power, mercie, and the like, as they are revealed in his word? are these things strange unto thee? certainly, then the spirit of God hath not yet begun to work in thee, thou hast yet no dramme of sanctifying grace, thou art yet in thy naturall state, and so under the wrath of God, and subject to the curse of God: therefore if thou tender the good of thine owne soule, never rest till thou finde thy self in some measure enlightened, and to that end, be diligent in hearing, reading, and meditating in the Word of God, and use all other meanes with care and conscience that serve to that purpose.

Here further, in that the new man is renewed, first, in knowledge, the question may be, how farre forth true beleivers are renewed, in respect of the knowledge of God, and of good things.

Answer, onely in part, not perfectly in the time of this life, therefore the Apostle here speakes in the time present: and to this agrees that 1 Corin. 13. 9. *we know in part:* and this may serve to settle our mindes in regard of the manifold doubts and controversies that are in the Church, and may teach us not to marvaile, though men of singular wits, deepe judgement, great reading (admit that to be sanctified) doe not see all truth, but have their errors, wee must remember that the spirit of God doth not renew their mindes, to give knowledge of God, and of good things perfectly in the time of this life, but so farre forth only as is needfull for the good of Gods children.

Observe yet further, our Apostle saith, the new man is renewed, in knowledge, or acknowledgement, in such manner as is effectuall to a conformitie, or likeness with God in holinesse.

Hence we are taught, that true illumination, and sanctified knowledge cannot be severed from further holinesse in will, in affections, and indeed in the whole man: and this is cleere from that place, Rom. 12. 2. *Be ye changed by the renewing of your minde, that yee may prove what is the good will of God, and acceptable, and perfect, (that is) approve, love, and obey the good will of God:*

And the reason of this is, because the worke of Gods Spirit can never bee frustrate, hee never workes in vaine, but alwaies attaines the end of his working. Now the end of speciall illumination, and of sanctified knowledge wrought by the Spirit of God, is the restauration of the will to some measure of libertie in good things, and that there may be a conformitie to God, in holinesse in the whole man, and therefore true illumination can never bee severed

Quest.

Ans.

Doct. 6.

Sanctified knowledge cannot be severed from further holinesse.

Reason.

Quest.

from further holinesse in the will, and in all other powers of the soule.

Now haply some may demand, what I meane by true illumination and sancified knowledge: are not all those truly enlightned, who have knowledge of the word of God wrought in them by the spirit of God?

Answ.

For answer to this, wee must know, that there are two sorts of knowledge of the word of God, and both wrought in the minde by the spirit of God.

1

One generall and historicall, which is onely a bare conceiving of the sense and meaning of the word, and such knowledge may be ioyned with Atheisme, unbeliefe, and sin.

2

The other is speciall and experimentall knowledge, and that is a particular acknowledgement and perswasion of the truth of the whole word of God, a beleeving knowledge, and that cannot bee disioyned from good affections: it is not possible that any should in truth acknowledge, that God is true in his word, mercifull, bountifull, and iust, and not be affected to him accordingly, and that is the knowledge I speake of.

Vse.

Many know much, and yet answer not their knowledge in a measure of holinesse because their knowledge is not sanctified.

And for use of this point, hence take wee notice whence it comes to passe, that many knowing much, yet answer not their knowledge in a measure of holinesse: here is the reason, their knowledge is not sanctified, they know, but doe not acknowledge the truth of Gods will revealed: they are like hard vessels of stone, that hold sweete water, and yet are not sweetned by it, their mindes hold a fleeting knowledge of God, and of his will, but are not thereby bettered: and indeed, many times men by their generall knowledge become much more obstinate in sinne, than they that are altogether ignorant: why doth not our knowledge of Gods iudgements often seene, and of his mercies continued unto us, worke in us a loathing of sinne, and a love of holinesse? Surely, here is the cause: our knowledge is a meere speculation, and not a feeling knowledge, we subscribe not in our hearts to the manifest truth of Gods justice and mercy: we must therefore labour not onely to abound in knowledge, but in spirituall sense and feeling of that wee doe know, as wee are taught, Phil. 1. 9. *Taste and see how gracious the Lord is*, saith David, Psalm 34. 8. Not onely see and understand the goodnesse of God, but taste and feelee the sweetnesse of his mercie, illumination not sanctified may bee in the reprobate, yea in the Diuell himselfe: therefore let us labour for sanctified knowledge, and let us pray to God that (together with the knowledge of his will) he will give us the strength of his grace, that our illumination and knowledge may be effectuell and powerfull to worke (in our wils, affections, and whole man) the like measure of holinesse.

Note.

Doct. 2.

Gods image in man standeth in a conformity with God in true knowledge and holinesse.

Now further, in that the Apostle doth thus describe the new man, to bee a man renewed into an acknowledgement, even to a conformitie and likenesse with God in holinesse, wee may easily see what is the likenesse of God in man, wherein it consisteth: namely, in conformitie and likenesse with God in true knowledge and holinesse. The image of God consisteth not in the naturall substance, or faculties of the soule, or the abilities of it, (for then wicked men have still the image of God in them, and the Lord sending their soules to hell, he condemnes his owne image) but in spirituall gifts, in wisdom, and justice, in true knowledge, holinesse and righteousnesse, which were in man before the fall by creation, and now (since the fall) are wrought in man, even in such as are renewed by grace: this text (together with that Eph. 4. 24) makes this a cleere point: I only note it in a word, to shew the weaknesse of that argument of the Papists, which they use to bring from Gods image in man, to prove it lawfull to make an image of God.

Vse.

The weaknesse of that popish argument from Gods image

For thus they reason: Man (say they) beares the image of God, but wee may make the image of man, therefore wee may make the image of God: A meere shift: if we rightly understand wherein the image of God consisteth, wee shall easily see how this argument, and discerne it to be but a cavill: for that wherein man

man is like to God, is spirituall, and invisible, and therefore cannot bee deciphered by a visible image.

Oh, but (say they) though God the Father, or the holy Ghost cannot be pictured, yet God the Son (he being not only God, but man also) he may.

I answer them, there cannot possibly be made an image of whole Christ, for Christ is both God and man, and the maine thing that makes him Christ, is his God-head, which can no way bee resembled, and so there cannot bee made an image of Christ, without leaving out that which chiefly makes him Christ, namely his God-head. If wee desire to see a lively image of Christ, and to see it to our comfort, let us then looke on him in the preaching of the Gospel, and administration of the Sacraments: if there we see him, we shall have comfortable fellowship and communion with him.

Looke we yet a little further on this description: in that the Apostle calles a renovation in knowledge, and true holinesse, a renovation after the image of God, or a renovation to a likeness with God: heereby is further discovered.

Who amongst men are most like to God, and what men doe most of all resemble him, namely, such as are most renewed in knowledge, and in true holinesse and righteousness: we must understand this of meeere men; for Christ God and man, is in more speciall manner the image of his Father, as we have it, chap. 1. 15. He is the eternall Sonne of God, and so his most absolute and perfect essentiall image, and in him (as hee is God manifested in the flesh, God incarnate) doth God manifest himselfe to be most wise, most just and mercifull. Therefore I thus propound the point: that such amongst men, such as being meeere men, are most renewed in knowledge and holinesse, are most like to God, and do most resemble him.

And the ground of this may be that wee find, Rom. 8. 29. Because they who are renewed in knowledge and holinesse, are made most like to the image of Christ, and being conformed and made most like to him, who is the perfect image of God, they come most neere to a similitude and likeness with God: though that place doe chiefly drive at conformitie with Christ, in suffering in this life, and so in glory in heaven: yet it may be also truly understood of conformity with him in holinesse begun in this life, to bee made perfect in the life to come: and so it proves the point in hand, that such as are most renewed in true knowledge, and true holinesse, are most like to Christ, and therefore doe most resemble God. We find in the Scripture, that the Magistrate is the image of God, in regard of his eminency and authority over others; and therefore also hath the name of God put upon him, Psa. 82. 1. *God standeth in the assembly of gods.* And man is the image of God in regard of his superiority over the woman, and the whole family, 1 Cor. 11. 7. Yet both that image of God in the Magistrate, and that in the husband, is but an image that is outward: it is rather (as I may say) in the garment, than in the body. The true and most lively image of God in men in this life, is a renovation in knowledge and holinesse; and they that are most renewed in true knowledge and holinesse, are most like to God.

And this may serve to comfort and cheere up the hearts of all such as are truly renewed in knowledge and holinesse, and encourage them daily more to bee renewed. For doubtlesse they that beare the image of God in any measure, are deare to the Lord; and the more they are renewed (according to his image) the more deare are they to him; as children that most resemble their fathers, are most deare to the father. It is the greatest joy and pleasure that a man can have in any worldly thing to behold his owne image in his child; and to looke on his owne favour, and fashion, his owne countenance, and conditions in his child: so the more a man resembleth God in holinesse, the more is hee beloved of God, and the more deare to him, as being so much liker to him: yea, there is no comparison

in man, to prove it lawful to make an image of God, discovered.

Obiect.

Answ.

Doct 8.

Such men as are most renewed in knowledge and true holinesse, are most like to God.

Reason.

Vse 1.

Comfort and encouragement to such as are truly renewed in knowledge and holinesse.

parison betweene Gods delight in his children, and the delight that earthly parents take in their children, but onely for our understanding it may thus be delivered: His love to his children, and his delight in them exceeds the love of earthly parents, as far as God excels dust, earth, sin, and corruption.

And hence it is that *Abraham* is called the friend of God, *Iam. 2. 23.* The Lord was delighted with him, as one familiar friend is with another: and *David* a man after Gods owne heart, *Act. 13. 32.* and the Saints at Rome beloved of God, *Rom. 1. 7.* Howsoever the goodnesse and holinesse of Gods children doe not profit or pleasure the Lord (for he stands in no need of it) yet is it pleasing to him; and not for the merit of it, but through Christ hee is delighted in the righteousnesse of his children, *Psal. 147. 11.* And they that are most renewed in holinesse according to his image, are most deare and precious in his sight, both in life and death. Let this then comfort such as are renewed in any measure according to Gods image, and encourage them to labour still more and more to be renewed.

Note.

Vse 2.

It is most displeasing to the Lord when such as are most renewed in true holinesse are wronged, or any way abused.

Again, for a second use of this poynt: Is it so, that such as are most renewed in true holinesse, are most like to God? then certainly it must needs be a thing most displeasing to the Lord, to doe them violence, to offer them any indignity or any way to abuse them: for that abuse reacheth to God, whose image they beare, to abase any that carries about the least stampe of Gods image, is (no doubt) a great sinne; but to abuse them, in whom there is a lively and large impression of it, in whom a man may discern evident tokens of Gods image renewed, that is (without question) a grievous sinne, and highly displeasing to the Lord. We know if a man doe any way abuse the Kings picture, hee doth hazard the losse of his life: and if one offer violence to an idolatrous image of Christ, yea of the Virgin *Mary*, or any other Saint among the Papists, he exposeth himselfe to danger of death: and will the Lord suffer the wrong done to his image appearing in his children escape unpunished? No certainly, it cannot be: the Lord will one day punish such impiety most severely. And yet it is a common thing in the world, to offer and to doe much wrong, and many indignities to such as beare the image of God: yea many times to reproch them, even because they beare his image, & to lay that as a reproch before them, and in that respect to cast contempt on them, & to load them with opprobrious terms. Surely, such persons as so do, shew whose image they beare, even the image of the world, and the image of the divell, and we are not to marvell at their manner of dealing. *Marvell not my brethern though the world hate you.* And let them know, that they abusing such as carry about the image of God, that abuse resteth not on the parties abused, haply poore men, or women, but it reacheth to heaven, even to the Lord whose image it is, and they wrong such as are most precious in the sight of God, and as tender to him as the apple of his owne eye, *Zach. 2. 8.* And will the Lord long endure so tender a part (as it were the apple of his eye) to be touched and wronged? No, no, assure thy selfe hee will not long suffer himselfe to be touched in that which is so tender and precious to him, and thou shalt not long escape his punishing hand. Thinke on it, whosoever thou art, that dost any way abuse such as are renewed in holinesse according to Gods image, and repent of that sinne.

1 Ioh. 1. 13.

Vse 3.

We are highly to esteeme such as are renewed according to Gods image.

Yea, let us every one learne to esteeme highly of them that are renewed according to the image of God; let us hold them most deare to us, that are most deare and precious in the sight of God: let us therein follow the example of *David*, *Psal. 16. 3.* Let all our delight be in the Saints that are on the earth: and in such should our delight be. For assuredly we love not the Lord, unlesse we love them that beare his image, and especially such as are most renewed according to his image, and that in speciall manner: yea, seeke to doe them good, as occasion is offered above others.

One

One thing yet remains to be observed in these words, the Apostle saith, the new man is created of God.

Hence it is most plaine, that the new man is Gods creature, hee is not a thing pieced, but newly created, and the worke of his hand alone, (for it is proper to him to create) and wee are able to bring as little helpe to our renewing, as wee did, or could doe to our first making.

And this meets with that conceit of the Papists, who say, we may dispose and prepare our selves to receive grace. If it be absurd to say, we did helpe the Lord, (or could have done) to create us: as absurd and false is it to say, we can bring any helpe to our re-creating and renewing, as the Papists say.

There is a conceit also of some phantasticke spirits in the world, that is met withall by this truth, that the new man is Gods creature: some light brained there be, who say, that the new man in the regenerate, is a participation of the very nature of God, and that such as are regenerate, are partakers of the divine essence of the God-head, and they are deified, so they speake blasphemously. We are to take heed of this delusion. Such as hold this conceit brag much of the Spirit, and of illumination, but indeed they are puffed up with a spirit of giddinesse, and are deluded by the divell. This their conceit cannot stand with the truth of this text, that the new man is created of God, for so no creature doth God communicate his divine essence:

But haply they will object and say, that holinesse is essentiall in God and part of his nature (as are all his attributes) there is nothing in him accidentall, and the holinesse that is in the regenerate, commeth from the holinesse of God, and therefore it is part of his divine essence.

I answer, though holinesse in the regenerate flow from the holinesse of God, yet is it not in them as a part of his nature, but in them a created gift, and a quality, or accidentall thing. To make this plaine, by that which is better knowne, we know there is strength in many creatures, in men, in bruit beasts, I might adde also in devils: now there is no strength in any creature, but it comes from the power of God; and shall wee therefore say, that the strength in the creature is part of Gods essence and divine nature? Surely then we make not onely bruit beasts, but devils also partakers of Gods essence, and deified, which to say, or once to thinke, is more than monstrous blasphemy. We are to hold, that strength in God is essentiall and of his nature, but the strength of the creature is a quality, and accidentall; and so is holinesse essentiall in God, and accidentall in men.

They object againe, that in Christ *the fulnesse of the God-head dwelles*, chap. 2.9. and we receive of his fulnesse, Ioh. 1.16. therefore wee are partakers of the divine nature to our regeneration.

Ans. In the one place it is expressly said, *the fulnesse of the God-head*; in the other, *the fulnesse of grace*, Ioh. 1.14. therefore if they be not wilfully blind, they may see the weaknesse of that objection.

Object. They say further, a Pet. 1.4. the regenerate are said to bee partakers of the godly nature.

Ans. The word is not *deus*, but *deus*, *quod*, the Apostle useth not such a word as doth signifie the God-head, or the essence of God: but words that may be rendered as they are [*godly nature*] and thereby is meant such a precious and excellent gift of holinesse, as doth resemble the divine uncreated holinesse of God.

That is but your glosse (say they) the holy Ghost speaks plainly, and hee is wiser than we.

It is true, and therefore his meaning is not presently conceived, by looking on the bare words and letter of the text, but by comparing that, with this our text, where the Apostle saith, *the new man is created of God*: and with other places of Scripture: we may not make the Spirit speake contradictories. Other objections

Dox. 9.

The new man is Gods creature, and the worke of his hand alone.

Use 1.

Confutation of a popish conceit.

Use 2.

Confutation of that fancy, that the new man in the regenerate is a participation of the very nature of God.

Object.

Ans.

Objection.

Ans.

Objection.

Ans.

Object. 3.

Ans.

objections they make, but these are the chiefe. I wish that such as have bene tainted with this conceit, would but duly consider on what weake grounds it is built, and that they would in humillity compare one place of Scripture with another; and then (no doubt) by the blessing of God, they may come to see and acknowledge their error.

Ver. 11. *Where is neither Grecian nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond free: but Christ is all, and in all things.*

In this verse our Apostle goes on further to describe the new man, and here hee sets him out by the condition of the persons in whom the new man is found.

First, by shewing that in such as are renewed according to Gods image, neither nation, nor outward condition is any thing. And this the Apostle doth expresse in divers particulars, that where the new man is, there is neither Grecian nor Jew, there is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free.

Secondly, by shewing that in whom the new man is, Christ is all in all, in the last words of the verse, *but Christ is all, and in all things.*

Now the occasion of this speech, (that where the new man is, there is neither Grecian nor Jew, &c.) was this. Certaine false teachers sought to put it into the heads of the Colossians, that among such as were renewed, there was great difference; some were better than others, and had priviledge above others; as that a Jew was better, and had priviledge above the Gentile; the circumcised above the uncircumcised, and that it was a great priviledge to be a Grecian, rather than a Barbarian, or Scythian, and to be a free man, rather than a servant. Hereupon the Apostle takes occasion to teach the contrary, that among such as are renewed in true holinesse, there is no such matter; there is neither Grecian, nor Jew, circumcision, nor uncircumcision, &c. *but Christ is all and in all things.*

Come wee to examine the words touching the sense and meaning of them, (*where*) that is, where the new man is, where there is a renovation according to the image of God: *there is neither Grecian, nor Jew, &c.* His meaning is not that among them there is a confusion of all conditions, and no difference of nation, or outward condition: but the differences that bee among men, either of nation, or outward condition, are nothing available to commend them to God, or to make them more or lesse pleasing in his sight, as the false teachers taught: that such as are renewed, are neither bettered towards their true holinesse, justification in the sight of God, and salvation, in that they are Jewes, circumcised, or free men: nor hindered in that they are uncircumcised, Barbarians, Scythians, or bond men. And that this is the meaning of the Apostle, it may plainly appeare by that which he addes, that *Christ is all, and in all things*; for Christ is all in all to justification, and salvation. And the meaning of those words (*that Christ is all, and in all things*) is this, that Christ is to all true belcevers, (whether Grecians or Jewes, &c.) all-sufficient, even in all things that pertaine to their justification, and salvation, hee being made to them (as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 1. 30. *Wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.*)

Now here (for further opening of the words) two questions are to be answered, touching the differences here expressed.

First, it may be demanded, why the Apostle addes to Jew circumcision, for Jew and circumcision seeme to be both one.

Answer. The Jewes had a double prerogative; one of nation, and another of Sacrament; one, in that they were of the seed of Abraham, or tribe of Juda, and so they were called Jewes.

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Interpre-
tation

2 Quest

Answer.

The other, in that they had the seal of the covenant, circumcision, by which they were distinguished from other people, and so called circumcision: and both these did false teachers magnifie; and therefore the Apostle doth expresse them both distinctly.

Again, it may be demanded, why (to Grecian) the Apostle adds Barbarian, and Scythian, seeing under the name Grecian, is wont to be signified all the Gentiles; as appeares, Rom. 2. 9, 10.

Ans. The Grecians used to call all other nations, and especially such as were more rude (*Barbarians*) and among them they hold the Scythians most barbarous: the Apostle therefore adds Barbarian, and Scythian, to signifie, that not the most barbarous amongst the Gentiles (converted and renewed in true holiness) were lesse pleasing to God in respect of their rudeness and incivility; but were as pleasing to him as the Jewes or Grecians.

Thus then we are to conceive the words of this verse; as if the Apostle had said, Where there is renovation (according to Gods image) there, no difference of nation, or natural condition (be it Grecian, Jew, Barbarian, Scythian, &c) doth either help or hinder men as concerning their true holiness, justification in Gods sight, and their salvation: but to them, of what nation or condition soever, Christ is all-sufficient even in all things that pertaine to their justification and salvation.

First, let it be here observed of us, that our Apostle doth not simply denie all difference and distinction of men, in regard of nation or outward condition: among such as are renewed according to Gods image, and that among true Christians there is no difference nor distinction at all, in respect of nation or outward condition; but that the differences that be amongst them are not available in regard of holiness, justification, and salvation. Here is no simple, but a respective deniall of these differences, of Grecians, Jewes, &c. This is to be observed, that we may discern how loose and ungrounded that conclusion is, that some would force from this, and the like places of Scripture, namely this:

That by this text (and the like) is taken away all difference, and distinction of men among Christians. It is the conceit of the Anabaptists, that this, and the like places of Scripture, doe take away the distinction of magistrate and subject, master and servant, and the like; and that there ought to be no such difference among Christians, as one to be over others, and one to be in subjection to another: but indeed it is a mere fancy; this text rightly understood, will not beare such a conclusion: and so to gather from hence, is to contradict the plaine evidence of Scripture in other places. Isa. 49. 23. the Lord speaking of the conversion of the Gentiles (and so of the Church under the Gospell) hee saith, *Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and Queens shall be thy nurses.* And the Apostle, 1 Tim. 2. 2. bids us pray for Kings, and for all that are in authority; yea in this very chapter the Apostle confirmeth the authority of superiours, and teacheth subjection of inferiours, with the duties of both.

But (say they) Gala. 3. 28. the Apostle saith, *all believers are one in Christ, there is neither Jew nor Grecian, &c.* therefore there ought to be no difference of men among Christians.

Ans. It is true, all true believers are one, as they are members of Christ, in respect of their spiritual state in Christ: and that is the meaning of the Apostle: but they are members of some civill society in the world, and so not all one, but there is, and ought to be difference and distinction among them. If that were a good collection, *believers are all one in Christ*, therefore there is no difference of Magistrate and subject among them; by the same reason we might confound the sexe of man and woman: for the Apostle saith in that place, *there is neither male nor female.* Wee see then, that neither that, nor this text doth any whit favour that Anabaptistall fancy: that there is no distinction of men among

Answer.

The Anabaptistall fancy, that all difference and distinction of men among Christians is taken away, discovered.

Obiect.

Ans.

The Gospell and Christian government, and policy may well stand together.

mong Christians, but it is a truth to be received, that the Gospell, and Christian government and policy may well stand together.

Observe we in the next place, that the Apostle here reckons up the most excellent differences amongst men: as the Grecian, who did excell the Gentiles in humane wisdom: the Jew to whom (as the Apostle saith, Rom. 9.4.) *appertained the adoption and glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the service of God, and the promises*: Circumcision, the profit whereof was much, every manner of way, Rom. 3.2. and outward freedome which is an excellent thing; and he saith, that none of these are any thing available (in such as are renewed according to the image of God) to commend them to God, and to make them more holy and pleasing to him,

Doct. 1.

No outward privilege, prerogative, or excellency, is of any account in Gods sight, to make any one more holy or more pleasing to God.

Reason.

Use 1.

Confutation of the Papists, teaching that some outward callings and actions commend men to God.

Use 2.

We are not to judge of Gods favour by the outward fashion of any mans person.

Hence we may easily raise this conclusion: that no outward privilege, prerogative, dignity, or excellency whatsoever is of any account in the sight of God, to make any one more holy or pleasing to God: it is not the greatest preheminance in the world, that is of any esteeme or worth, to commend a man in Gods sight. I might shew this by many particulars; to insist in one or two. Was it not a great privilege to bee of Christ his kindred, in respect of blood; no doubt it was more than to be allied to the greatest Emperour in the world? and yet marke what our Saviour saith of it, Matth. 12.48. *Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?* as if hee had said, what is that privilege to bee my kinsmen by blood? is that any thing worth to make them more holy or pleasing to God? no, no, I tell you, they are my brethren, and my mother, that doe the will of my father which is in heaven: alliance in faith is nearer and dearer to mee than that in the flesh. Who ever had greater honour than was vouchsafed to the Virgin *Mary*, to be the mother of Christ: yet was all this nothing to commend her to God: had she not borne Christ in her heart, as well as shee bare him in her wombe, she had never been saved.

Now the reason why outward privileges are of no esteeme in the sight of God, to commend any as more holy and pleasing to him, is plaine, namely this, because they are carnall and temporall; and the things accounted of (with God) are spirituall and eternall, ven things agreeable to the nature of God.

Now then first this meets with an error of the Papists, who teach, that some outward callings and actions commend men to God; as single life, fasting, and voluntary poverty; yea, they say, that virginity and single life is a state of perfection farre excellling marriage, and in it selfe of such dignity, as it commends the person before the judgement seat of God, and deserves Gods grace, full remission of sins, the kingdome of God, and life eternall: a doctrine not onely blasphemous and full of contumelie, and derogation from the blood of Christ, but such as doth directly crosse that often repeated (and therefore most infallible) sentence of Scripture, that God is no acceptor of persons, that he regards no outward state, condition, or dignity in the world: for what else is single life, but an outward state or manner of life; and therefore admit it to be most excellent, yet of it selfe it cannot commend, or make any one more pleasing to God.

Again, for a second use of this poynt; is it so, that no outward privilege, dignity, or excellency, is of any account in Gods sight, nor doth make holy or pleasing to him? oh then judge not of Gods favour by the outward fashion of the person of any man, deeme not such a man holy or highly favoured of God, because hee is encreased in wealth, honour in the world, or the like: doe not thou so judge of thy selfe; thinke not highly of thy selfe in regard of birth, honour, wealth, favour, or any outward excellency whatsoever: it is not any of these, or the like, that doth commend thee to God, & make thee pleasing to him: thou art indeed to praise God for any excellency or preferment he hath vouchsafed unto thee, & having assurance of Gods favor in Christ, thou maist lawfully enjoy it: for God gives to his children, together with the outward blessing, joy in the

the fruition and use of it, Eccl. 5. 18. 19. but yet take heed thou boast not thy selfe, and lift not up thy selfe in that respect with God, as if that outward good thing did make thee pleasing to God; no, no, remember it, it is not any outward preferment whatsoever, no, not in religion: that in it selfe makes thee holy and pleasing to God. It was the conceit of the people of God in ancient time, that they were highly in Gods favour, because they had Gods Temple, and his outward worship amongst them, Ier. 7. 4. they cried out, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, and is it not the conceit of too many in our dayes? doe not many blesse themselves, and thinke themselves highly in Gods favour, only because they have beene baptized, and they enjoy the ministry of the word, and are made partakers of the outward Sacrament? Oh deceive not thy selfe whosoever thou art: these things as they are only outward priviledges (which thou enjoyest, and haply others want,) do not make thee holy and pleasing to God, or nearer to heaven, no, thou maist have and enjoy these and perish, yea, they may bee to thee, scales of deeper condemnation. Ever thinke on it, that it is not any outward priviledge, no not in religion, that can of it selfe make thee pleasing to God: and therefore doe not lift up thy selfe in regard of the fruition of outward priviledges of religion, never rest till thou have further assurance of Gods favour, than the enjoyment, and outward use of them.

Observe yet further, that the Apostle here reckons up the meanest differences amongst men (as uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, who were most rude bond-servants, who were not such as amongst us serve for wages, or apprentices, but bound slaves, which were wholly their masters, and reckoned as part of his goods, Exod. 21. 2. and he saith, none of these hinder such as are renewed according to Gods image, as concerning holiness, justification in the sight of God and salvation: hence then we may take up this conclusion.

That no outward want or meanes whatsoever, doth in it selfe hinder men in respect of holiness: no baseness, either of nation, or outward condition, doth in it selfe make men lesse holy, or lesse pleasing to God: And this is built on the same ground with the former conclusion.

Because no outward thing is of any account with God to make more or lesse holy: and hence it is that the Apostle doth cheere up such as be of meaner condition, 1. Cor. 7. 21, 22. *Art thou called being a servant? care not for it. Let not that discourage thee, thou art as pleasing to God, as a freeman, For he that is called in the Lord being a servant, is the Lords freeman.* I might adde to this, other places of Scripture, but no doubt we will easily yeeld this to be a truth.

And the use of it is that which the Apostle teacheth in the place before cited, it serves for the comfort of such as be of meane condition in the world, it may teach them, not to bee dejected, and cast downe in regard of their meane, and poore condition: their hard condition (which is not in them to change) may haply deprive them of many priviledges, and benefits belonging to this life, yet it nothing at all hindereth them in spirituall and heavenly things. What dost thou then, thou that art poore, and despised in the world? what dost thou vexing thy selfe with the consideration of thy meane estate? art thou renewed according to Gods image? then lift up thine eyes, and cheere up thine heart, with the sight of that honour belong to thee. I may safely tell thee, thou art as high in grace and favour with God, as the greatest Monarch in the world. A sweete comfort for all poore and silly soules, on whom proud rufflers looke so bigge, as if they were not worthy to wipe their shooes: well, care not for their contempt, comfort thy selfe with this: if thou bee renewed according to Gods image, thou art as high in Gods favour, as the greatest in the world, and thinke on that to thy comfort.

Now, here a doubt is to bee answered, in that no excellency, or meanes of outward condition is of any account with God, to make men more or lesse ho-

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Doct. 2.
No outward want or baseness doth in it selfe make men lesse holy or lesse pleasing to God.

Reason. *Because* no outward thing is of any account with God to make more or lesse holy: and hence it is that the Apostle doth cheere up such as be of meaner condition, 1. Cor. 7. 21, 22.

Use. *Such as be of poore and meane condition in the world, are to be cheered up in this, that their hard condition hindereth them not in spirituall & heavenly things, they being renewed according to Gods image.*

A doubt.

Answer.

and pleasing to God: some may doubt of this, and say, there is difference of the workes of men renewed, in regard of outward state and condition; as the worke of a Minister, or Magistrate is farre more excellent than the worke of a meane Artificer, and the Lord hath promised, and will crowne some with a greater degree of glory in heaven than others, Daniel. 12. 3. *They that turne many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.* Therefore it may seeme that even outward states, and conditions of men, are of some account with God.

To this I answer, it is true indeed, if wee compare worke to worke, there is difference betwixt one worke, and another; and no doubt there shall bee degrees of glory in heaven according to their kinds, but neither one worke nor other doth make men more accepted in the sight of God: the Lord in mercy hath promised, and will reward the workes of true believers, with different degrees of glory, according to the kind and quality of them, but not any worke whatsoever, be it never so excellent, or by whomsoever it is done, doth make a man holy and accepted of the Lord; and consequently no outward state is of account with him to make men accepted with him, or more or lesse to justifie them in his sight.

Now proceede wee to such other points of instruction as are hence offered unto us; make wee further that the Apostle saith, where the new man is, where renovation is according to the image of God, there Christ is all, there Christ is all-sufficient, as concerning acceptation with God, and justification in his sight. I might here take occasion to shew this all-sufficiency to justification in Gods sight, even to the justification of such as are renewed in knowledge (after the image of God) is only found in Christ; and that there is not as the papists teach,

A first justification by Christ, and a second by the workes of the regenerate.

But this wee have heretofore touched, and it is not so proper to this place, but the point more agreeable to the purpose of the Apostle here laid before us, is this.

We may plainly see that Christ is all-sufficient to such as are renewed according to Gods Image: such as are renewed in knowledge, and true holiness, to them is Christ all-sufficient, to them is Christ the supply of whatsoever can bee wanting, if they bee without spot, Christ is circumcision to them, yea, a more excellent circumcision than the lawes had: if they bee Scythians, Christ is in stead of civillie to them, and hee is their perfect wisdom; if they bee servants, hee is their perfect freedome; in a word, Christ is every way sufficient to them that are sanctified, and renewed according to Gods image, to make them accepted and pleasing to the Lord, 1. Corinth. 1. 30. the Apostle saith, *That of him (that is) of God, and his meeting is; yee are begotten of God, regenerate by his Spirit, and renewed as may appeare by the simple phrase, 1. John. 4. 4. Ye are of God, and have overcome them, for greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.* Understanding the Spirit of God; so then the Apostles meaning in saying (ye are of him) is this, yee are regenerate, and begotten anew of the Spirit of God in Christ Iesus, and then to this the Apostle subjoynes who of God is made to us, even to us that are so regenerate and renewed; *Wisdom, perfect holiness, sanctification, and redemption.* Heb. 10. 14. The holy Ghost saith, *(That which was offering hath he consecrated for ever them that are sanctified)* Christ hath consecrated, or (as the word is) perfected for ever them that are sanctified. A plaine prooffe of this; that to them that are sanctified and renewed (according to the image of God) Christ is all-sufficient, & full perfection.

Let this be laid up as a ground of excellent comfort in the hearts of all such as are truly renewed by the Spirit of God: it onely serves to cheere up the hearts of all such as are truly sanctified in any measure; they finde and fee in them-

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Doctrine 3.

Doct. 4.

Christ is all-sufficient to them that are renewed according to Gods image, applying to them whatsoever can be wanting and making them accepted in Gods sight.

Vse. 1.

Comfort to such as are truly sanctified

selves great wants, and a world of imperfections, and they many times sigh and groane under them, but let them not be too much dejected, let not the consideration of thy wants overwhelm thee, and swallow thee up. Art thou in any measure renewed according to Gods image? hath the spirit of God been powerful in thee, to the abolishment of thy corruption, and to thy renovation in some measure renewing thee in knowledge, and true holinesse? Oh then, let not the sight of thy wants, and imperfections utterly cast thee downe; remember that thy renovation according to Gods image doth give thee assurance, that Christ is to thee all-sufficient; thou art indeed to labour, and strive to cast off thy wants and infirmities, and dally more and more to be renewed in knowledge, and holinesse; the more thou art renewed, the more will bee thy comfort, and the greater thy assurance that Christ is to thee all-sufficient, according to the exhortation of the Apostle, 2 Pet. 1. 10. *Give diligence to make your calling and election sure.* But if thou finde thy selfe oppressed, and kept downe with the remainder of thy corruption, that thou canst not aspire to that perfect on of holinesse thou desirest, let not that altogether discourage thee, and put thee cleane out of heart: stil strive thou forward, and withall raise up thine heart with this comfort, that thy perfection is in Christ, & that Christ is to thee, perfect wisdom, holinesse, and righteousness, that he is to thee every way sufficient to thy justification, and salvation, yea that in him, and thorow him thy imperfect holinesse is accepted as well-pleasing to God, and shall one day bee crowned with glory.

And as this doctrine is thus to be thought on, to the comfort of such as finde themselves truly renewed according to Gods image: so on the other side, let it bee considered by such as can witness with themselves (if they deale truly) that they are in no sort so renewed, but that still they carry about the image of the old man, that they are still in their naturall state, and condition, they are to thinke on it to this purpose.

Is it so that Christ is all in all, even to the actual justification of such as are renewed according to Gods image? Then certainly to thee that art not so renewed, to thee that art in no measure sanctified, is Christ, as yet nothing at all to thy comfort, I say, (as yet) what hee may be hereafter Pleave to the Lord: But as yet thou hast no assurance that Christ is any thing to thee to thy comfort: thou art yet as an infidell or heathen without Christ, and then marke how the Apostle sets out thy state, Ephel. 2. 12. *If thou bee without Christ, Thou art thou an alien from the common wealth of Israel, Thou hast no fellowship with Gods people, Thou art a stranger from the covenants of promise, and hast no hope, and art without God in the world:* and say what thou wilt lodge, and truth, thou hast no true hope to bee saved. Wicked, and prophane persons commonly beare themselves out in their sinnes, with this, I am a sinner indeed, but Christ his death is sufficient for all. It is true, Christ his death is sufficient for all, but you must know, it is not effectual to all, but onely to such as are sanctified: the words are plaine, both here, and in the place before cited. Heb. 10. 14. *He hath made perfect for ever, them that are sanctified.* Such as are not renewed nor in any measure sanctified, to them Christ is nothing at all to their comfort: therefore goe not thou on blindfolded with that conceit, that Christ his death is sufficient for all: No, no, that is but the sophistrie of the devill: Where no sanctification is, there is no assurance of justification by Christ; remember it, and carrie it home with thee: Christ is all-sufficient, need every one, but to such as are renewed according to Gods image; if thou be not so renewed thou hast no part in the merit of Christ; thinke on it thou prophane person, whatsoever thou art, and let it shake thee out of thy carnall securitie, and stirre thee up never to rest till thou finde thy selfe in some measure renewed, and sanctified.

against the feeling of great wants and imperfections in themselves.

Vse 2.
To such as are in no measure sanctified, Christ is as yet nothing at all to their comfort.

They that have Christ have all things, though they have nothing else, and they that want Christ have nothing, though they have all things

Note.

Doct. 4.

The most holy have need of Christ.

Reason.

Because the most holy, though they are renewed in the time of this life, and their best works are but imperfectly holy, they are not answerable to the strict rule of Gods justice. Hence it was that David prayed Psal. 119. 76. *That Gods mercie might comfort him according to his promise.* He durst not stand to the rigour of his justice, but he fled to his mercie; and Job saith, Job 9. 3. *If man, meaning a man that is holy, or at least, thinks himself so, disputes with God, he cannot answer him one thing for a thousand.* These & many other places of Scripture, make this a cleere point, that the most holy have need of Christ, to make them and their works accepted of the Lord.

Vse. 1.

Such as are in the greatest measure renewed according to Gods image must remember they stand in need of Christ his righteousness.

Vse 2.

Such as have no holinesse at all stand in exceeding great need of Christ, and yet commonly they feele not their want.

Object.

Some doe gather from hence (In that Christ is all in all) that they that have Christ, have all things, though they have nothing else; and they that have not Christ, have nothing, though they have all things: which indeed is most true, and of most excellent use, that they that have Christ, no miserie can make them miserable, and they finde more comfort in the least morsell of bread God gives them, than they that have kingdomes at their command, and yet want Christ: but as I take it, this point is not so naturally gathered from hence, and therefore I only name it, and passe by it.

Observe we farther, that the Apostle saith, Christ is all; and in all things that is (as we expounded it) to all true beleevers: he is all-sufficient to all true beleevers, whether they be Grecians, or Iewes, &c. of what nation or outward estate forever they be.

Hereby, first we may see, how that text is much abused by some, 1. Tim. 2. 4. where the Apostle saith, *That God will all men shall be saved*: which is to be understood not of all particular persons on the earth, but of all sorts and kindes of men: for the Apostle here saith, that Christ is all to all, meaning all beleeving Grecians, Iewes, &c. to men of all Nations, and conditions, and so hee teacheth how to expound that other place, *That God would all men be saved*. Yea hereby we may see that the Church of Christ is Catholike, it is universall, spread over all the world, it is not to be drawne from the fellowship of all Nations, to one citie of Rome, or a peece of Europe, as it is by the Papists, or as once it was by the Donatists, to a part of Africa. But on these things I will not stand, the point more profitable hence offered is this:

In that the Apostle saith, Christ is all to all, even to all beleevers renewed according to Gods image, whatsoever they be. Hence we may gather thus much:

That the most holy have neede of Christ: even such as are most renewed in knowledge and holinesse, stand in neede of Christ his righteousness, to make them and their best workes accepted of the Lord.

The reason of this is plaine (namely this) because the most holy, and the most renewed, are but in part renewed in the time of this life, and their best workes are but imperfectly holy, they are not answerable to the strict rule of Gods justice. Hence it was that David prayed Psal. 119. 76. *That Gods mercie might comfort him according to his promise.* He durst not stand to the rigour of his justice, but he fled to his mercie; and Job saith, Job 9. 3. *If man, meaning a man that is holy, or at least, thinks himself so, disputes with God, he cannot answer him one thing for a thousand.* These & many other places of Scripture, make this a cleere point, that the most holy have neede of Christ, to make them and their workes accepted of the Lord: Christ is all-sufficient to the most renewed.

And let such as are in the greatest measure renewed, remember that though they be never so holy, yet they stand in need of the righteousness of Christ: and take heede of that hellish pride of the Papists, Pelagians, and Familists, who dream of perfection in this life.

Againe, it is so, that even such as are most holy have neede of Christ: Oh then, how great neede of Christ have others, who are not renewed, who have no manner of holinesse in them? certainly they stand in exceeding great neede of Christ, and yet commonly they have least apprehension and feeling of it. Many will confesse that without Christ, all are miserable, yet few feele themselves to stand in such neede of Christ as they doe: a plaine evidence hereof it is, that thousands blesse themselves in a conceit of their own goodnesse, that they are honest men, or women: they never bare malice to any, they ever dealt truly with all, and never did wrong to any. These indeed are good things: but herein many applaud themselves exceedingly, and their own hearts tell them, they are righteous, and have no need of Christ.

Oh will some say, wee cannot thinke such a wicked thought, that wee have

Answer.

no need of Christ: why, we confesse our selves to be sinners, and therefore we confesse we have need of Christ.

I answer thee, haply thou dost confesse thy selfe to bee a sinner, yea, a great sinner, but it is only in grosse and generall termes: seldome or never wilt thou confesse thy particular finnes: and if thou be convinced of thy particular sinne, dost thou not then beginne to extenuate and lessen it, and say, that a great sinne is a little sinne, and a little sinne is no sinne. Yes, dost thou not sometimes seek to hide thy sinne under the colour of vertue? As that thy drunkennesse, is but good fellowship: thy covetousnesse, but good husbandry: thy pride in apparell (which now is growne to a great height) is but decencie, and whatsoever thou puttest on, or how garish soever thy apparell bee, it is but going according to thy calling: I appeale to our selves, whether it be not so with many of us?

Now what is this, I beseech you, but to say in our hearts, though with our mouths wee confesse, that wee are sinners; yee in our hearts to say, we have no need of Christ?

Let us therefore labour to cast out of our hearts this wicked thought, labour thou to feele thy selfe to stand in such great need of Christ, as thou dost. In respect of the greatness of thy sinnes: and empty thy selfe of all conceit of goodnesse in thy selfe, and remember, that the most renewed (according to Gods Image) have need of Christ: and so become even nothing in thy selfe, that thou maist bee all in Christ Iesus, and that Christ may be all in all unto thee.

Verf. 12. Now therefore (for the elect of God, holy, and beloved) put on tender mercie, kindness, humbleness of minde, meeknesse, long suffering.

Our Apostle having ended his exhortation to mortification, and putting away of sinne, which exhortation was begunne, verf. 5. and continued hitherto. In this verse he comes to exhort the Colossians to the putting on, and raking to themselves certaine particular vertues, and he holdes on his exhortation (here begun) to the end of verf. 15. And it may thus bee branched out, in regard of the vertues wherunto the Apostle exhorteth.

1. They are either such as he exhorts unto simply, verf. 12, 13.

2. Or by comparison, verf. 14, 15.

1. And againe, the first sort of vertues, hee sets downe particularly in this 12. verf.

2. And then shewes wherein they are to bee declared, verf. 19. (namely) in forbearing one another, and forgiving one another.

To come to the handling of this twelfth verse: first of all, the note of inference (therefore) shewes that this verse hath relation to something foregoing, and indeed it hath respect to that the Apostle said, verf. 10. that they had put on the new man: and from thence hee doth here further exhort them, to put on (as it were) the parts of the new man: as if he had said, you have already begun to put on the new man, therefore you ought to put on all the parts of that new man: so is this verse inferred, as a conclusion on that, that they had put on the new man: and here the Apostle reckons up certaine particulars belonging to the new man, which they ought to put on, five in number: *Tender mercie, Kindnesse, humbleness of minde, Meeknesse, Long suffering.*

Now therefore put on tender mercie, &c.] And this exhortation is not thus barely propounded, but it is backed and strengthened by an argument taken from a *Decorum*, in regard of their excellent estate, and that expressed in three things; that they were; First, *Elect of God.* Secondly, *Holy.* And thirdly, *Beloved.*

T: 3

And

Interpre-
tation.

And therefore it was meet and convenient, that they should carry themselves answerable to such an excellent dignitie. Now therefore (saith the Apostle) *as the elect of God, holy and beloved, &c.* And so wee see the dependance of this verse, on that which went before, together with the generall matter contained in the same.

Come we to the words of it. In the originall, the words runne thus, *Put on therefore as the elect of God, &c.* In that forme of speech (*put on*) the Apostle doth still continue his Metaphor, taken from clothing the body, comparing the vertues here reckoned up, to the parts of that glorious vesture of the new man, or to goodly ornaments belonging to it (*as the elect of God*). This forme of speech (*elect of God*) is something different, both in the originall and translation from that Tit. 1. 1. and that Romans 8. 33. and (as I take it) it comprehends more under it: and by (*elect of God*) in this place, we are to understand not only such as were chosen of God before the world was, even from all eternitie to life and salvation, but such as were also in time, by the preaching of the Gospell, called out and selected from the world, and effectually called to the knowledge of Christ, and to beleve in him, and to repent of their sinnes: for we finde (effectually vocation) sometimes thus expressed under the name of election, 1. Pet. 2. 9. *Ye are a chosen, or elect generation*, and that here meanes thereby vocation, it is plaine in the end of that verse, *that ye should shew forth the virtues of him that hath called you out of darknesse into his marvellous light*. Now this election in time (namely) effectually vocation, is here chiefly meant by the Apostle, when he saith (*elect of God*) yet so also as he doth comprehend under it, eternall election: and his meaning is, when he saith (*elect of God*) effectually called of God, being by him chosen to life and salvation, before the world was, (*holy and beloved*) that is, sanctified by grace, and beloved of God in Christ. Thus then are these words to be conceived, as if the Apostle had said:

Now therefore seeing you have begun to put on the new man as a garment, still goe on, and put on the particular parts, and goodly ornaments, that appertain to that glorious vesture, even those excellent vertues of tender mercie, kindnesse, humblenesse of minde, meeknesse, and long suffering, as is fitting, and becomes such as are effectually called of God, being by him chosen to life and salvation before the world was, and sanctified by his grace, and beloved of him in Christ.

Let us now descend to such points of doctrine, as are here offered to our consideration.

And first note we the inference of this verse, on that which the Apostle had said before, that the Colossians had put on the new man: that they having put on the new man the Apostle here further exhorts them, to the putting on of these particular vertues of *tender mercie, kindnesse, humblenesse of minde, &c.*

Doct. 1.

Exhortation
to particular
duties of holi-
nesse, is not
needlesse, even
to them that
are most holy.

Hence take we notice of this much: That even such as are renewed in knowledge and holinesse, according to Gods Image, have need (notwithstanding) to be stirred up to particular duties: exhortation to particular duties of holinesse, is not needlesse, but very necessary even to them that are most holy: this is cleere from this context, and we may further confirme it by other places of Scripture: Hebr. 6. 9. the Author of that Epistle saith, *We have perswaded our selves better things of you, even such things as accompany salvation*: and then vers. 11. 12. he doth desire them, that they should every one shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end, that they should not be slothfull, but followers of them, which through faith and patience inherit the promises. 2. Pet. 1. the Apostle having set before them, to whom he write, that the power of God had given them all things, pertaining to life and godlinesse, vers. 3. yet vers. 5. he stirs them up to joyne one vertue to another: *Therefore give all diligence to your duty, joyne moreover, vertue with your faith, and with verie knowledge.*

Now

Now the reason of this point is plaine, namely this, such as are renewed in knowledge and holinesse, have in them (indeed) the seeds of all vertues, yet those seeds are much hindred (by the corruption of nature still remaining in them) from breaking out, that they cannot bring forth fruits as they ought: and they have need to be helped forward, and (as it were) many times watered by the preaching of the Gospell, by admonition, by exhortation, and by other good meanes, let apart to that purpose.

And therefore for the use of this (in a word) let not such as have the greatest measure of knowledge and holinesse, thinke it needlesse for them often to be excited & stirred up to holy duties; haply thou hast as much knowledge as he that is a teacher, yea thou art a teacher thy selfe, yet thy affections may be wrought on, and helped forward in holinesse, by conference with others of meaner gifts, and private persons: and thou maist be much furthered in comfort by them, as the Apostle shewes in his owne Ex ample, Rom. 12. *For I long to see you, that I might be comforted together with you, through our mutuall faith, both yours and mine;* and therefore though thou dost abound in knowledge and holinesse, yet suffer thy selfe to be stirred up to particular duties, even in private, but especially in publike: and to that end consider, howsoever thou maist profit much in knowledge and holinesse, by private reading and conference; yet through the mercifull dispensation of the Lord, much more by the publike ministry and preaching of the Word, that hath the promise and blessing belonging to it; and therefore make thou conscience to attend with diligence (as oft as thou maist) on the publike ministry of the word of Gods grace, as Peter called it, Act. 20. 32. *which is able to build thee further, and to give thee an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.*

Observe in the next place, that the Apostle here exhorteth the Colossians to put on tender mercy, kindnesse, humblenesse of minde, &c. as the elect of God, holy and beloved: that is, as it becommeth such as are effectually called, sanctified, and beloved of God in Christ.

Here then we may plainly see, that there is and ought to be a *Decorum* proper to the Elect of God, holy and beloved, that true beleevers (called, sanctified, and beloved of God in Christ) ought to carry themselves as becometh those that are called and sanctified, and answerable to their holy and happy estate, there ought to be a difference betweene the affections and lives of true beleevers, and the affections and lives of others not yet called nor sanctified. Which point is much beaten on, and often urged in Scripture, and especially in the Epistles of Paul. Rom. 6. 13. saith the Apostle, *Give your selves unto God, as they that are alive from the dead, and give your members as weapons of righteousness unto God,* Ephes. 4. 1. *I therefore being prisoner in the Lord, pray you that you walke worthy of the vocation wherunto ye are called:* and verf. 17. *This I say therefore, and testifie in the Lord that ye henceforth walke not as other Gentiles walke, in vanity of their mind,* Phil. 2. 15. The Apostle would have true beleevers so different from others, as that they should, as lights, shine in the world, holding forth the word of life. All which places manifest this point, that true beleevers ought to carry themselves as becometh them, in regard of their excellent estate, being called, sanctified, and beloved of God in Christ, and that there should bee a manifest difference betweene them and others, not called, both in heart and life. And this hath not only ground in the word of God, but it is also consonant and agreeable to reason: even reason it selfe may teach, that such as are taken out from the corrupt state of the world, and advanced to the glorious liberty of Gods children, sanctified and beloved of God, should demean and carry themselves according to so great preferment, and to such an excellent condition.

And this is to be thought on by all such as are, or hold themselves to bee, effectually called, sanctified, and beloved of God in Christ; they are to remember the

Reason.

Use.

They that have the greatest measure of knowledge and holinesse, must be content to be often stirred up to holy duties.

Note.

Dost. 1.

True beleevers called, sanctified and beloved of God in Christ, ought to carry themselves answerable to their holy and happy estate.

Use.

True beleevers effectually

ly caled and sanctified, are to remember the excellency of their condition, and especially in time of temptation to keepe them from falling into any knowne sin.

to sinne
by which
the world
is made
knowne
by the
world

Note.

Doctrine 2.
Whom God hath from everlastings chosen to life and salvation; them he will in time sanctifie, and to them he will in time make knowne his love.

Use. 1.
That wicked conceit, that if men be appointed to salvation; they shall not perish howsoever they live, overthrowne.

Note.

the honour and dignity of that holy and happy condition; and thereby will be stirred up to carry themselves accordingly, ever labouring to decke their souls inwardly with all the sanctifying graces of the spirit, and to shine forth in their lives in all holinesse and godly conversation; and when they are set upon by Satan or the world (without) or by their owne corruption (within) inticing them to any knowne sinne; they are then to thinke on the honour of their high and holy Calling, and thus to reason with themselves: Shall I (that am taken out of the corrupt waies of this world) be drawne backe againe to tread in the same path with them that are going towards hell? shall I (that am sanctified) make my selfe like to such as are prophane, and walke after their owne lusts? Shall I that am beloved of God, and within compasse of his especiall love in Christ, by yeelding to his temptation, make my selfe worthy to be hated of him? Noly, no, far be it from me, I am called of God, and I am to walke worthy of my calling; I am sanctified; and I am not so to defile my selfe; I am beloved of God in Christ, and I will not so requite his unspeakable love to me. This ought to be the meditation of all such as are effectually called; sanctified and beloved of God in Christ: and let them remember that a knowne sinne in them, as pride, covetousnesse, or the like, not onely wound their owne consciences, but it brings dishonour to God, and disgrace to their holy profession. It is a scandall to the weakes, a meanes to keepe backe some yett called; it gives advantage to the obstinate, and opens the mouthes of the enemies to the truth, and to prophane persons, to speake evill of their holy profession. These things they ought to thinke on; and so to endeavour to walke answerable to their holy calling.

Observe we further, that the Apostle joynes these three things together: **Elect of God, Holy and Beloved.** And he saith, these three were found in the Colossians: that they were Elect of God, holy and beloved.

Hence we may gather thus much, that where Gods eternall election (for that, as I shewed, is here implied) hath gone before; there holinesse, and Gods love manifested shall in time follow after, and in time they shall meete together. Whom God hath elected to life and salvation before all times, they shall in time be sanctified and made holy; and have Gods love in time manifested to them, even shed abroad in our hearts. Rom. 5. 5. for howsoever such as are elected to life and salvation, are (double) beloved of God before their calling; yett his love is secret, and not knowne to them till they be called and sanctified.

On Gods eternall election, doth ever follow in time, holinesse; and Gods love manifested; and these three shall in time meete together. And thus the Apostle teacheth plainely. Ephes. 1. 4. saith he; *God hath chosen us before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy & without blame before him in love.* Thos. 2. 13. he saith, *God hath chosen you to salvation; through sanctification of the spirit and the faith of truth, whereinunto he called you by our Gospell, to obtaine the glory of our Lord Iesus Christ.*

This meets with that wicked conceit of prophane persons, who use thus to speake, If we be chosen and appointed to life and salvation; undoubtedly wee cannot perish howsoever we live; for Gods election is certaine and unchangeable, and therefore what need we endeavour to live holily, and to doe any good workes? Blasphemous mouth, and prophane wretch, whosoever thou art; dost thou not see how thou severest those things which God hath conjoyned, and will have in time to be found together, in all that shall be saved? thou must know, that whom God hath chosen to life and salvation from all eternity, them he hath also appoynted in time to be holy; yea, it is a certaine truth, Gods eternall election doth worke (in time, in all his elect) another election whereby they chuse him to be their God: and Gods eternall love doth (in time) worke in them another love, whereby they love God againe, 1. Joh. 4. 19. *we love him,*

him, becauſe he loved us firſt: and therefore deceive not thy ſelfe: as God hath appointed to the end, namely, life and ſalvation, ſo hath hee appointed to the meanes to bring to that end; and none come to bee glorified, but ſuch as were before elected, called, juſtified, and ſanctified, Rom. 8. 30. thinke on it, and remember it.

Againe, is it ſo, that on Gods eternall election, ever followes holineſſe: then there is comfort for ſuch as are truly ſanctified; they may hence gather and conclude, that they are in the number of Gods choſen, and ſuch as ſhall bee ſaved; the divell will ſuffer any man to ſay, he is one of Gods choſen, his ſinnes are forgiven, and he hopes to be ſaved: but would any man proove it, and have ſuch prooſe of it, as may ſilence the divell himſelfe ſtanding againſt it? let him then looke to the holineſſe of his heart, and life; and if he be able thence to inferre, and conclude his election, certainly he hath learned an holy and ſound kinde of reaſoning, and ſuch as will never deceive him, but minifter comfort to him at all times: and though the divell roare, and tyrants rage, and breathe out nothing but death and deſtruction againſt him; yet this will bee his comfort, that hee is one of Gods choſen, and beloved of God, and therefore nothing can come to him to his hurt, but the Lord will turne all their malice and miſchiefe intended, to his owne glory, and his good: which is a ſweet comfort.

What that forme of ſpeech [*put on*] doth offer to our conſideration, I have heretofore ſhewed: only thus much further we may profitably conſider in the application of it to theſe particular vertues, *tender mercy, kindneſſe, humbleneſſe of minde, &c.*

That theſe vertues are goodly ornaments, and precious jewels, wherewith we are to beautifie and adorne our ſoules. This indeed is that clothing of broyded gold, Pſal. 45. 13. that will make thee glorious in the ſight of God, his holy Angels, and all good men. As for that tricking up of the body in new-fangled attire, it makes thee but odious in the ſight of God, and all good men: yea, it makes men and women (like to thy ſelfe) ſcorne and contemne thee, yea point at thee, and ſay, there goes a proud foole: therefore let all thy care, thy coſt and time be ſpent in decking thy ſoule with the rich and precious gems and jewels, that are here reckoned up by the Apoſtle.

Now touching theſe particulars in generall, we finde that they are all, ſuch as are required in the commandements of the ſecond Table: as *tender mercy, kindneſſe, meekneſſe, and long-ſuffering*, are comprized under the ſixth commandment: and *humbleneſſe of minde*, under the fifth. And this is not to be paſſed by without ſome obſervation.

We are to marke that the Apoſtle coming to exhort, to put on the particular parts of the new man, hee doth thus inſiſt on thoſe parts of the new man, that belong to the ſecond Table of the commandements. He paſſeth by the duties of holineſſe required in the firſt Table: and though indeed duties of holineſſe and righteouſneſſe doe ever goe together, and are to bee conjoyred in all that are truly ſanctified: yet the Apoſtle here paſſeth by the duties of holineſſe, andargeth the Colofſians to the putting on of the duties of righteouſneſſe, to expreſſe their renovation, and ſanctification in duties of love and mercy towards their brethren.

Our leſſon hence is this, that our renovation and ſanctification muſt bee expreſſed, and muſt appeare, againe the duties of holineſſe towards God, ſo eſpecially in the duties of love, and mercy towards men: for howſoever ſanctification doe chiefly conſiſt in holineſſe towards God, yet is it moſt of all manifeſted in the duties of righteouſneſſe towards men. Hence it is that our Apoſtle, Gal. 3. 14. ſaith, that *all the Law is fulfilled in this: Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelfe*: his meaning is, true love of men doth ever include true love of God; and

Doſt. 2.

Comfort for ſuch as are truly ſanctified: their ſanctification concludes certainly, their election and ſalvation.

Note.

The goodly ornaments and precious jewels that do moſt adorne and beautifie Chriſtians.

The goodly ornaments and precious jewels that do moſt adorne and beautifie Chriſtians.

Doſt. 4.

Our renovation and ſanctification muſt appeare, eſpecially in the duties of love and mercy towards men.

and he that truly loves his neighbour, loves God also, and so is the love of our neighbour said to be the fulfilling of the Law; and therefore it must needs be, that duties of love to men, doe most of all manifest and make knowne inward sanctification, 1am. 1. 27. *Pure religion, and undefiled before God, even the Father, is this, to visit the fatherlesse and widowes, in their adversity, and for a man to keep himselfe unspotted of the world.*

Object.

Why (might some say) pure religion, and undefiled in the sight of God (who sees the heart) is rather inward and spirituall, consisting in faith, the feare of God, love of God, trust in God, depending on his providence, and in worshipping him in spirit and truth, in a reverent and holy use of his holy ordinances, and in religious sanctifying of his Sabbaths.

Answ.

It is true indeed, pure religion doth chiefly stand in these things, but yet the power of it doth most appeare and shew forth it selfe in duties of love to men, and that is the meaning of *James*, when he saith, *Pure religion, and undefiled before God, &c.*

Vse 1.

Such as the Papists hold most holy and religious, discovered to have no dram of true holinesse in them.

By this we may plainly see, that those men and women which the papists doe magnifie, and esteeme the most holy, and most religious persons in the world, and as Angels amongst men, their Monkes, Nunnes, Friars, and such like, have no dramme of true holinesse and religion in them: true holinesse ought to shew it selfe, not onely in holy duties towards God, but in duties also of love and mercy towards men. Now they are tied (by their order) to live apart from all society of men, and to spend their dayes in contemplation, in prayer, and fasting (forsooth) and not to have any thing to doe with other men in the world, and therefore certainly there is not any jot of true holinesse in them.

Vse 2.

Such deceive themselves, who rest in the duties of Gods outward worship, and haply unto them adde harmelesse life, and goe no further.

Againe (by the doctrine delivered) we may see that many amongst us deceive themselves with a vaine shadow of holinesse: for why? I doe not many amongst us content themselves in hearing the word, receiving the Sacraments, and haply they adde to these an harmelesse life; they doe no hurt, alas, what is all this? what good doe they? where is their tender mercy, their kindnesse, their meeknesse, their long-suffering? These things are not to be found in them; it may be they professe and say, I have enough for me and mine; I will betake my selfe to a quiet life, I will not trouble my selfe with worldly cares and business, I will goe to the Church, and serve God: and (it may be) they doe all these things, they serve God in the outward duties of his worship, but still they are as covetous, and as hard-hearted as ever they were, still as fierce, and as ready to be stirred up to wrath and revenge, and still as farre off from the duties of love and mercy, which cannot be performed without cost and charge, as ever before. Is this holinesse? Is this religion? Is this a service of God pleasing unto him? No, no, deceive not thy selfe, true holinesse, and true religion is that which shewes it selfe, not onely in duties of holinesse towards God, but in duties of righteousness also towards men: and the true service of God is to love and serve him in serving of men, in doing duties of love and mercy to men. Think on it, and remember it; and let no day passe thee without some good worke of love to thy brethren, no more than it doth without prayer, and other holy duties of Gods worship.

Come we now to the particulars here urged by the Apostle: the first is, *tender mercy.*

Interpretation.

Put on tender mercy] The originall words are, *bowels of mercy*, which is a metonymicall forme of speech often used in Scripture, whereby is meant, pity and compassion towards them, that are any way afflicted, or in any miserie. And here the Apostle doth understand such a measure of pity and compassion, as affecteth the very intrals and bowels, making the bowels to dilate themselves, and (as it were) to open themselves, and to burne and yearne within.

Here

Here then, not to speake of this vertue so much as might be said of it, but onely so much as the words of the Apostle doe leade us unto.

We are first of all taught, that wee are to be tenderly affected towards those that are any way afflicted; we are to put on such pittie and compassion towards them that are in any distresse, as doth moove our hearts towards them, and doth possesse our hearts with a true touch and feeling of their miserie, yea with as lively a sense of it, as if we our selves were in the same case with them. This is cleare from this manner of speaking [*bowels of mercy*], as may easily appeare by the use of this phrase, in other places of Scripture. Genes. chap. 43. vers. 30. it is said, that *Iosephs* affection was so strongly moved towards his brother *Benjamin*, that his bowels were enflamed, and did burne within him, 1. King. chap. 3. vers. 26. We reade, that one of the women that contended before *Salomon*, about the living child, was not able to endure that the child should be divided, because (saith the text) *her compassion was kindled*: her bowels were mooved, and did yearne, and burne within her: and we may reade of it in many other places, that the greatnesse and tenderesse of affection is set out by mooving, and yearning of the bowels; and therefore this forme of speech [*bowels of mercy*] doth teach us to put on such pittie and compassion towards such as bee in distresse, as doth worke in us a lively sense and feeling of their misery. And hence is it that wee are exhorted to weepe with them that weepe, Rom. 12. 15, and to remember them that are in bonds, as though wee were bound with them, Heb. 13. 3.

The reason and ground of this is plaine; wee are members of one and the same body, and the Lord hath laid it as a Law on the members, that if one member suffer, all suffer with it, 1. Cor. 12. 26.

Now before we come to the application of this point, a question is to bee answered. It may bee demanded, whether we are to be touched with a feeling compassion towards them that suffer just punishment for their evill deedes; when wee see Gods punishing hand on wicked persons for their evill doings, or no.

Ans. We are at all times to follow the rule of Christian love, which teacheth us to put on tender bowels, pittie, and commiseration towards all in distresse, being of the same nature with us, yet with this difference: if they who are punished, suffer as blasphemers, or traitours, and for any offence directly against Gods glory, the good estate of the Church, and religion; then wee may bee so farre from pittying them, and sorrowing for them, and putting on tender bowels, in regard of their sufferings, as wee may bee glad and rejoyce, not pleasing our selves in the smart of any, bee they never so wicked, but for other speciall causes.

As first, for the manifestation of Gods justice: because we love God, and his glory is deare unto us, we may magnifie and praise his justice in punishing such wicked persons, according to that, Psalm. 58. 10. 11. *The righteous shall rejoyce when he seeth the vengeance.* &c.

Secondly, in regard of others, who at their punishment may learne to feare: as it is said of the bands of *Sennacherib* stricken with blindness, that they came no more into the land of Israel, 2. King. 6. 23.

Thirdly, because the godly are bettered by their example, they are thereby moved to consider the corruption of nature, how farre it carries, if it be not abolished or restrained: and so they are stirred up to a more narrow watch over their owne hearts and waies.

To returne to our purpose, and to make use of the doctrine delivered.

First, it being so that wee are to put on tender bowels towards the afflicted, and to them that are in any miserie: certainly then it ought to bee farre from every one of us to insult over such, and to make our selves merrie with their

Doct. 5.

We are to bee tenderly affected towards them that bee any way afflicted.

Reason.

Quest.

Ans.

Vse 1.

It ought to bee farre from us to insult over

them that bee
in distresse, and
to sport our
selves in their
affliction.

Vse. 2.

Wee are not to
content our
selves with
verball pittie.

their affliction, as the manner of some is, to take advantage on the affliction and misery of others, to deale hardly with them, to adde affliction to affliction, and to heape one misery upon another, and it is most barbarous and brutish, and after the manner of the dog to fall upon him that is downe, it argues exceeding hardnesse of heart; for the afflictions and miseries of our brethren, are visible sermons, moving us to pittie and compassion; and things seene, make deeper impression than things onely heard of. If we then (seeing the miseries of our brethren) be not moved with pittie towards them, but rather we insult over them, or we take advantage thereby to deale hardly with them; it is an argument of extreame hardnesse of heart, Psalm. 69. 26. *They persecuted him whom thou hast smitten.* Therefore lay iniquity on iniquity, and punish one sinne with another; or adde punishment to punishment, which is an heave crosse, and to be thought on by all such as insult over them that are in misery, or take advantage thereby to deale hardly with them.

Again, is it so, that we are to be tenderly affected towards them that are any way afflicted; yea so to bee affected towards them, that our inwards are to bee touched with a feeling of their misery? Surely then we are not to content our selves with that pittie that is too common in the world, (namely, verball pittie) *The Lord help thee:* or as James sets it out, Jam. 2. 16. *Go thy waies, warme thy selfe, fill thy belly, &c.* and yet supply nothing that is needfull: no, no, that is no feeling pittie. A feeling pittie (doublelesse) will make both the tongue to speake, and the hands to minister that which may bring ease and comfort: and where there bee bowels of mercy, there will be ever a willingnesse, and readinesse to the workes of mercy. And therefore deceive not thy selfe; if thou be hardly drawne to any worke of mercy, and it must be pulled from thee (as it were) by maine strength, by many arguments, reasons, and many inducements: thou hast no bowels of mercy, thou hast no feeling pittie in thee; and if no feeling pittie be in thee to the distressed members of Christ, it seales up to thee a fearfull conclusion, even this, that thou art not of the same body with them, and that thou hast not yet felt the love of God in thy breast, neither hast the love of God dwelling in thee. The text is plaine, 1. Ioh. 3. 17. *Whosoever hath this worlds good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels from him, or against him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* Remember therefore (for a conclusion of this) the argument here used by the Apostle: he wished the Colossians, as the Elect of God, holy, and beloved of God, to put on tender mercy: so I say to thee, if thou wouldest be sure of thine owne election to life and salvation, if thou wouldest have an infallible note of true holinesse, and if thou wouldest proove it (to the comfort of thine owne soule) that thou art beloved of God in Christ, then content not thy selfe with verball pittie, but put on bowels of mercy; let the knowne misery of others enter into thine heart, and move thy bowels towards them, even to minister ease and comfort, as any occasion shall bee offered, and as the Lord shall enable thee.

Doct. 6.

Workes of
mercy must
proceed from
an inward
mooving and
yearning of
the bowels.

Reason.

Here further, in that the Apostle saith, *put on bowels of mercy*, wee are taught, whence the workes of mercy, and the comfort we minister to others, either in word or deed, ought to proceed, namely, from the inward moving and yearning of the bowels, from the heart tenderly affected towards them, to whom we doe any good, Isai. 58. 10. The Prophet saith, *If thou poure thy soule out to be hungry.* Hee requireth not onely a pouring out of food to the hungry, but with the food, a pouring out of the soule, 2. Cor. 9. 7. *As every man wisheth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity.* Let this gift come from the wish of his heart: and that the Apostle there adds [*for God loveth a cheerefull giver*] may be the reason and ground of this duty. God loves cheerefulnesse in giving, and requires cheerefulnesse in all the workes of his service, Rom. 12. 8. and there can be no cheerefulnesse, unlesse the worke come from the inward affection of the heart,

heart, therefore every worke of mercie ought thence to proceed, even from the inward moving, and yearning of the bowels.

And take wee notice of this, and know that it is not a worke of mercie pleasing to God, that comes either from ones superfluity, or from the importunity of them that are in distresse, or from the example of others inviting us, or from a desire of praise or the like; much lesse that which is forced out from torture, or torment, to stop the mouth of a guilty conscience, as when wicked rich men lying on their death-beddes, are forced thorow the gripes of a galled conscience to give something to charitable uses: no, no, beneficence acceptable to God comes onely from tendernes of heart, and without that, al our bounty or shew of mercy whatsoever, is nothing worth; for the Lord looks rather at the affection, than at the outward action, in all duties of love and mercy. And heere is comfort for such as are of tender bowels, though they bee not able to doe any worke of mercy. Art thou tenderly affected towards the afflicted members of Christ? canst thou mourne with them when they mourne? canst thou pray for them when they are in distresse, though thou be not able to helpe them? assure thy selfe thy affection is as pleasing to God, as if thou wert able, and didst indeed minister helpe unto them, thinke on that to thy comfort.

One thing yet remaines to bee noted, the Apostle saith, (*bowels of mercy*) hee speaks in the plurall number, hereby teaching:

That our mercies must bee of divers kindes, according to the sorts of miseries, and often repeated, according to the divers subjects of miseries, or long continuance of them. It is not enough to minister outward comfort alone, or inward alone, to him that is afflicted both in body and minde: nor to enlarge our bowells once, to him whose afflictions continue, or to one or two, where there are many, whose misery should open and affect our bowels.

Now to the second vertue heere urged by the Apostle, (*kindnesse*) put on kindnesse.

This vertue extendeth and reacheth further than the former, for pittie and compassion is proper to those that are in some affliction and misery, but kindnes goes further: it reacheth to all, whether in prosperity or adversity, it is a sweete and loving disposition of the heart, and a courteous affection to all, shewing it selfe in pleasing and in good speech: it is an easinesse to be used and employed for the good of others (for so the originall word doth properly signifie, and wee find it so used in other places of Scripture) our Saviour saith, My yoke is easie, Mat. 11. 30. the word is *εὐσπλαγχνία*, and it may be rendred kind, my yoke is kind: it (saith the Apostle) 1 Pet. 2. 3. yee have tasted how bountifull the Lord is; it may bee rendered, how sweet, or how kinde the Lord is; and so in many other places that might bee cited. Heere then wee see what is required of us, namely this, that wee put on a sweet loving affection of heart towards all, shewing it selfe in kind speech and countenance, that wee shew our selves affable and courteous to all, and tractable and easie to bee employed for the good of all; That is true kindnesse and curtesie: and this wee are required to shew one to another, Eph. 4. 32. bee ye courteous one to another, and tender hearted, forgive one another, even as God for Christs sake forgave you, and Gal. 5. 22. gentlenesse is reckoned up among the fruits of the Spirit.

Now this vertue (as it hath relation to the afflicted) it is to bee manifested in yeelding comfort and refreshing to them, and standing by them to helpe them in time of need, and to doe them good. *Abfolon* could finde it as a fault in *Hushai*, that he went not with his friend *David* in time of need, 2 Sam. 16. 17. is this thy kindnesse to thy friend? and as it hath respect to others, not afflicted, it is to bee expressed, as before I have shewed, in giving good speech, and in shewing good countenance, and in easinesse to bee used in any thing wherein wee may doe good to others: and this is to be considered of us: true kindnesse

Uu

stands

Works of mercy please not God, which come from superfluity, or from the importunity of distressed, or from example of others, or from desire of praise, and the like, or are forced out from the gripes of a galled conscience.

Vse. 2.

Comfort for such as bee of tender bowels.

Doks. 7.

Our mercies must be divers and often repeated.

Vse.

How wee faile in this duty. What kindnesse is.

Doctrine 8.

We are to put on a sweete loving affection of hart towards all, shewing it selfe in kinde speech and countenance.

How this vertue is to bee manifested to the afflicted.

And how to others not afflicted.

Vse.
Discovery of
counterfeit
kindnesse.

Works of men
 cap ease not
 good, which
 come from in-
 portunity or
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 of others, or
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 and of the in-
 ded out of
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 which come

Ps. 2.
We must take
heed wee bee
not deceived,
with the sha-
dow of this
verruē.

Two Motives
stirring us up
to put on
kindness.

I

Daffodils &
 We are so glad
 to see you
 very affection
 & love
 in kind
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 & love

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses, which appears to be a directory or a list of subscribers. The names are written in a cursive script, and the addresses are listed below them.

stands not in cap and knee, in bowing and bending, and in outward ceremonies and complements, no, no, that is but the curtesie of the world, it is commonly severed from good affection, yea, sometimes it is a maske of a wicked and ill affected heart, and a worke of the flesh, neither is it to bee esteemed true kindnesse that stands in practise of plausible behaviour, as in drinking with the drunkard, which is counted a note of a kind nature: or when men make themselves popular and pleasing to others, by giving way to them in their froward courses, (as in yeelding liberty to such as live under them) for all licentious and disordered manner of living, suffering them to swear and swagger, and to bee prophane without check and controulement: they that so do are accounted kind, as yee shall heare some servants say, oh, such a man is a kind master, do his worke, and I warrant you then hee will let you doe what you will, worke hard all the weeke, and hee will let you run whether you list upon the Sabbath day. Is this true kindnesse? is this a fruit of the Spirit? no, no: true Christian kindnesse takes not away necessarie restraint and correction, but doth mitigate and moderate it, making it more easie to bee borne; and profitable true kindnesse consisteth in a tractable willingness, in a facilitie and easinesse to be used only in that wherein wee may doe good to others, yea in an easinesse to be employed for the good of all, which is to be marked of us: for wee may be deceived with the shadow of this vertue. Many heathen men have had, and many more naturall men may have in them the counterfeit of this vertue, they are kinde to such as are kinde to them, and friendly to their friends, but true kindnesse must goe further, we must therein be like God himself, his example we must follow: Luk. 6 35, hee is kinde unto the unkinde, and to the evill, shew we so be kinde to our enemies and those that hate us, and there must bee in us an easinesse to be used for the good of all whatsoever they bee, friends or foes, remember we that,

And now to stirre us up to the putting on of this excellent vertue, consider with me these two things.

First, true christian kindnesse is a speciall meane to win the hearts of all un-
to us, hee that is truly kinde, tractable, and easie to bee used for the good of o-
thers, takes the best way to knit the hearts of all (especially of all good men) un-
to him, yea to seale up to his owne soule an assurance of Gods favour and lo-
ving kindnesse. The shadow of this vertue in heathen men hath bene of that
force that thereby they have marvellously carried away the hearts of men, and
hence it is that manie prophane and worldlie men doe much affect this vertue,
or at least the shadow of it.

Againe, consider on the other side that whatsoever other good qualities a man hath, yet if hee bee of an unkind and churlish nature he shall never winne the hearts of men, nor ever prevaile in any worthy service, in Church, in Common-wealth or Family: a soure, cynicall, and churlish behaviour is distastfull to every one. How was *David* galled with *Nabals* churlish answer? hee endured with patience *Sauls* laying wait for his life, and *Shemiers* cursing of him, but he could not endure that answer of *Nabal*; and had not *Abigail* met him and perswaded him to the contrarie, hee had not deft to *Nabal* (by the dawning of the day) any of his house to pisse against the wall.

If then we desire to be loved of all, & especially of our brethren (all good men) yea to be assured of Gods favour and loving kindnesse towards us, yea to be loved of all men, as may be for our owne good, and the good of others: let us put on a loving and kinde disposition of heart towards our brethren, yea an usefulness and tractable willingnesse, (as much as wee are able) to be employed for the good of all, whether they be kinde or unkinde to us; and remember that this vertue of kindnesse is of most excellent use in every worthy service either in Church, Common, wealth or Family: it winnes mens hearts to us, and the hearts being wonne, they are easily wrought on to any good purpose.

Come

Come wee to the third vertue (humblenesse of mind) put on (saith the Apostle) humblenesse of mind. Touching this vertue, know we that humblenesse of minde is a meane and moderate estimation of our selves, and of all the good gifts and graces we have, either of body or minde.

It hath a double relation, either to God, and then it is an acknowledgement of our nothingnes (as I may so say) and that all we have is from God: or it hath respect to men, and then it is an esteeming of others better than our selves, namely, such as are truly called, and Gods children: and this is humblenesse of mind heere meant.

Heere then first wee see, wee are to carry in us an humble minde, a meane and moderate estimation of our selves in respect of other men, we are to esteeme others better than our selves, and to this purpose the Apostle saith, Rom. 12. 16. *Be not high minded, but make your selves equall to them of lower sort, and yet more plainly, Phil. 2. 3. Let every man in meeknesse of mind, esteeme another better than himselfe:* I might adde to these, other places of Scripture to shew that this is our duty, but I chuse rather to stirre us up to the practise of it, for it may bee wee will easily yeeld that this is our duty, that we ought every man in humblenesse of mind, to esteeme others better than our selves.

Yet this vertue is hard to obtaine, it is contrary to nature, it is agreeable to nature, to bee proud of good things, as appears by *Hered, Act. 12. 13.* and *Saul* who was offended that *David* was preferred before him in the song, *1 Sam. 18. 7. Saul hath slain his thousand, and David his ten thousand,* yea, men are naturally proud of the shewes of things that are not in them, of glosses and shadows of good things, yea, and sometimes when they know they are not in them, but claw-backes and flatterers do ascribe to them: and therefore to stirre us forward, in the practise of this duty, even in humblenesse of mind, to esteeme others better than our selves, consider with me onely these two things.

First, we may see many good things in others, which we want, for God give his graces not all to any one, lest hee should have matter of pride, but some to every one, that none should be subject to contempt: yea, we may sometimes see those good things that be in us, in greater measure in others, than they be in us.

Againe, consider that we are privie to more sin and corruption in our selves, than wee can bee in others.

How many evill things are in us, if we search and ransacke our owne hearts, which may worthily make us hang downe our heads, and esteeme more basely of our selves than any other man can with any colour of reason speake or thinke of us? let these things be duly considered, and they will helpe us to hold down our hearts in humility, and take from us all matter of lifting up our selves above others; away then with those vaine and foolish words, *I am as good as thou, I am his better, and the like;* away with such proud and loftie thoughts, and let us put on this glorious ornament of humilitie; let us in humblenesse of mind every one esteeme another better than himselfe.

Observe we in the next place, the forme of speech here used by the Apostle, he saith not, put on humility, but humblenesse of minde. Hence wee are taught, that true humility is seated in the heart and minde, they indeede are truly humbled, that are of humble hearts and mindes.

And thus wee reade, that *David* clearing himselfe of ambition, and protesting his humility before the Lord. *Psal. 131. 1. saith, mine heart is not haughtie:* first he begins with the lowlinesse of his heart, and then descends to protest his humble outward carriage: it is the exhortation of the Apostle Peter *1 Pet. 5. 5. Devote your selves inwardly in lowlinesse of mind: God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble:* let your humility be inwardly in heart and minde.

First this doth discover to us, that the papists doe but bleare the eyes of the world with a counterfeit shew of humility, they would make the world believe that

It hath a double relation.

Doll. 9.
Wee are to carry in us, a meane and moderate estimation of our selves in respect of other men.

This vertue is hard to obtaine.

Note.

Two motives stirring us up to humblenes of minde.

Doll. 10.
True humility is seated in the heart & mind.

Use 1.
Popish humility is counterfeit.

that some among them are the most humble and mortified men alive, in that forsooth they forsake lands and goods, and put on the habit of a poore Monke or Frier: but indeed there is no true humilitie in them, for under their shew of humilitie, they nourish in their hearts the greatest pride that can be, even a vaine confidence in themselves, challenging to themselves a state of perfection.

Use 2.

The counterfeited shew of humilitie that is in the world discovered.

Againe, this doctrine, that true humilitie is seated in the heart, doth uncase and pul off the visor of humility from the face of many in the world, who make a faire shew, and carry a faire pretext of humility, that forsooth they can be content to lay their hands under the feet of their brethren, to performe the basest office to the meanest, when indeed they meane nothing lesse: haply they would lay their hands under their feet to supplant them: or as *Abshalon* did, 2 Sam. 15. vers. 5. make themselves plausible and familiar to strengthen their hands in bad purposes: let such know, that as they put on the counterfeited of so excellent a grace as humilitie, and varnish over their wicked intents with so faire a gloss, that their hypocrisie in this respect is the greater, and (without repentance) they shall receive the reward of such as cover sin with a lye, even punishment double in proportion to that which is due to open offenders: for their sin is double and enfolded one within another, and their punishment shall be answerable.

A popish cavill

It remains that we answer a popish cavill (occasioned from this) that wee are to put on humbleness of minde: they of that faction cry out against us, and say; wee be farre from humbleness of minde, in that we hold certaintie of salvation by faith: say they, you are proud and presumptuous, and carry your selves too high upon that excellent gift of faith (which indeed is a meere cavill) and herein they deale most injuriously with us, they may (if they will) observe that wee build not certaintie of salvation upon the gift of faith, or upon the dignitie of that gift (as they doe on the merit of works of grace) having (as they say) power given of Christ to merit (for that were arrogancie indeed: but we build assurance of salvation by faith on the promise of God propounding mercy, remission of sinnes, justification, life and salvation to all, that by true faith, lay hold on the death and obedience of his sonne incarnate, which is a rocke that never can be shaken: therefore wee cannot be justly taxed with pride and presumption, for holding certaintie of salvation by faith, apprehending the promise of mercie in the active and passive obedience of Christ.

What meekness is in a generall acceptation.

Now the fourth vertue here urged by the Apostle (*Meekness*) put on meekness: touching this vertue, that wee may rightly conceive it, know wee that meekness (in a generall acceptation of the word) is a calmenesse and quietnesse of heart and mind, a settled and quiet disposition of minde; free from perturbation. When the mind is settled and quiet, free from passion and disordered affections, then in generall sense there is meekness.

It hath a double relation.

Now this calme and quiet disposition of the heart and minde hath a double relation, either to God, and then it is a quiet and silent subjection of our hearts to the will of God revealed, though therein our wils be crossed, a meeke submission of our wils to Gods will revealed, though never so contrary unto them: and to this *David* exhorts, *Psal. 4. 4. Examine your owne heart upon your bed, and be still*; and of this spake the Prophet, *Isai. 30. 15. In quietnesse and in confidence shall be your strength*: as if hee had said, Your strength must be exercised, not in striving against, but in the enduring of Gods hand: or it hath relation to men, and then it is a quiet and calme disposition of heart, as is neither prone to provoke, nor easily provoked to anger, by an Injurie: and this is the meekness wee are to understand in this place, and not the other.

What meekness is here understood.

Doct. 11.

We are to put on calme and quiet spirits, and wee must

Here then is required of us, even of as many as hold our selves to be the elect of God, that we put on calme and quiet spirits, that we carry in us such a disposition, as is neither prone to provoke, nor soone provoked to anger by any injurie, and that is meekness. We read (1 Pet. 3. 4.) that a meeke and quiet spirit are ioyned

joyned together, as indeed being one and the same thing, and we shall finde this dutie often urged in Scripture: I referre you to the reading of Ephes. 4. 2. Gal. 5. 23. it is reckoned there among the fruits of the Spirit, and 2 Tim. 2. 25. the Apostle teacheth *Timothy* to instruct with meekenesse, them that are contrarie minded. A worthy example of this wee have in *Moses*, Numb. 12. 3. who being much wronged by *Aaron* and *Miriam*, yet was meeke, and not stirred up to anger: yea, he is there pronounced by the mouth of the Lord to bee a very meeke man, above all the men that were upon the earth. Other examples and testimonies might bee added, but these are sufficient to cleere it that this is our dutie, namely, that we carry in our bosomes, meeke and quiet spirits, and such a disposition of heart, as is neither prone to provoke, nor soone stirred up to anger.

Here then come such to be taxed, and justly to bee reproved, that are of hot, hasty, and turbulent spirits, soone stirred up to anger on every trifling occasion.

Now too many such (untaught and untamed) hearts be amongst us. Are there not many that shew themselves of unquiet and turbulent spirits, on the least occasion that may be? Yea are there not some that if they have but a conceit of a wrong offered, or done to them, if they but imagine such a thing, are so farre carried in their passion, and perturbation, that they shew themselves boisterous, and threaten to doe great matters?

Haply thou wilt say, why? Doe not wrong me, nor any way disgrace me, and I am as quiet as any in the world, you may live quietly enough by me, I warrant you, as long as you live: but if you doe me injurie, if you crosse mee of my will, then you must beare with me, I am somewhat passionate, and I cannot endure that.

Is it so that thou canst not endure to be wronged, nor to have thy will a little crossed? Where is then that Christian meeknesse that ought to bee in thee? Surely, of thine owne mouth may wee judge of thee: thou art as meeke as a Beare, or a Lyon, or as the Divell himselfe, he is quiet when he hath his will, but if that be crossed, then he rageth; and so is it with thee, as wee may gather by thine owne confession. Oh deceive not thy selfe, true Christian meeknesse that ought to be in every childe of God, is a quietnesse and calmnesse of spirit, when injuries and wrongs are offered or done to him, and that is the thing thou must labour for, thou must put on such a disposition of heart, as is neither prone to provoke, nor soone provoked to anger by injuries and wrongs, and that being once obtained, thou art of a meeke and quiet spirit.

Now then, to stirre us up to the putting on of this excellent vertue, consider wee,

First, the excellencie of it, it is a vertue of great account, and a thing much set by in the sight of God. 1 Pet. 3. 4.

Secondly, it is a testimonie that wee are taught of Christ and have his spirit in us, *Match. 11. 29. Learne of mee* (saith our Saviour Christ) *that I am meeke and lowly in heart, and ye shall finde rest unto your soules.*

Thirdly, consider (amongst others) that one excellent effect of this vertue recorded, *Proverbs 15. 1.* that it is of force, being expressed by soft and meeke words, not onely to keepe wrath from breaking out, but also to cause wrath, yea fierie wrath, being broken out, to returne and goe backe againe. A worthie example hereof we have in *Gedeon*, *Judg. 8. 2.* who with a milde and meeke answer appeased the hot and sharpe words of the proud Ephraimites against him, so as they had not a word to replie: the text saith, *ver. 3. Their spirits abated towards him.*

Consider farther that comfortable promise that is made to such as are meeke, *Match. 5. 5.* that they shall inherit the earth: *Blessed are the meeke, for they shall inherit the earth:* they shall have possession of outward good things, so farre forth as it may stand with Gods glorie, and their good. Yea so farre forth,

Uu 3

also,

be so disposed as that we neither bee prone to provoke, nor soone provoked to anger by any iniury.

Vse.

Reprooffe of such as are of hot and hasty spirits, soone stirred up to anger.

Obiect.

Answer.

Four motives stirring us up to meeknesse.

4

also, they shall bee hid in the day of the Lords wrath, Zephani. 2. 3. They shall bee protected from danger, when the Lord doth execute his judgements in the world.

If then we would be clothed with such a garment, as is much set by in Gods fight, if wee would rectifie it to our selves, and others, that wee have received the spirit of Christ, (and hee that hath not his spirit is none of his) if wee would prevail against that which no force is able to withstand, even the wrath and rage of sinfull man, and if we would have assurance that we have right and title to the comfortable promise of God, touching the fruition of the good things of this life, and protection from evill in the day of the Lords wrath, so farre as may bee for his glorie and our good: and in one word, if wee would bee thusly glorious in this world, and have assurance of everlasting glorie in the life to come: then let us learne of the King of glorie, Christ Iesus, to bee meeke and milde in spirit, and let us put on such a disposition of heart, as is neither prone to provoke, nor soone provoked to anger.

Come we to the last vertue here urged by the Apostle (*Long suffering.*)

What long-suffering is.

It hath a double relation.

Concerning this vertue, know we, that long suffering differs not from meeknesse in kinde, but onely in degree: for it is nothing else but a further degree of meeknesse: and that we mistake it not, we must understand, that this vertue also hath a double relation: there is a long suffering in respect of God, and that is a continued quiet submission of our wills to Gods will, under a long continued affliction, when the hand of God is long continued upon us, and we continue to subject our selves to it in patience and silence, that is long suffering in respect of God, and that is called long patience, Iames 5. 7. And of that the Apostle speakes, chap. 1. 11. *Strengthened with all might through his glorious power, into all patience, and long suffering, with joyfulness.*

There is also a long suffering in respect of men, and that is the long suffering here meant.

What long suffering is here meant.

And it is a continued calmenesse and quietnesse of minde after many injuries and wrongs offered, or done by men, when a man being much, and often provoked by injurious words, or deeds, doth not withstanding quietly passe them over, and put them up, and is still quiet and calme, not provoked to anger, then is he long suffering.

Dott. 12.

We are to bee of meeke and quiet spirits, though we bee often provoked to anger, and after many injuries offered and done unto us.

Here then we see, that wee are to put on a further degree of meeknesse, wee are to be of meeke and quiet spirits, though wee bee provoked to anger: after many offences and injuries offered and done to us, it is our parts to be of meeke minds, and not to be stirred up to anger: I will not stand long to prove this, being (as wee said) but a further degree of meeknesse, reade onely Galat. 5. 22. this vertue is there reckoned up among the fruites of the Spirit, whereby we are knowne to be the children of God, 1 Cor. 13. 4. It is reckoned as one, yea as the first of those excellent properties of love, that love is long suffering, and in many other places that might bee cited, wee finde this vertue commended to us, and indeed, it is a vertue rare, and scarce to bee found in this age of the world.

Vse.

Reproofe of them that are far from long suffering.

Where is that man that doth quietly, and in silence passe by many injuries and wrongs? Nay, we are so farre from long suffering, that wee will now suffer nothing at all. Yea, some slicke not to say, they will carrie no coales: and others hold it a disgrace to them, to pocket and put up an injurie, and say, shall I suffer my selfe to be made a foole? and so indeed to avoide the name of fooles they will doe the workes of fooles: for anger resteth in the bosome of fooles, Eccles. 7. 11. And many other reasonings of the flesh there be against this worthie grace of long suffering.

Two motives to stir us up to long suffering.

Now in a word to stirre us up to the putting on of this excellent vertue, consider we:

First,

First, that long suffering is one of the properties of God himselfe, hee is slow to anger, and abundant in goodnesse and truth, Psal. 103. 8. *The Lord is full of compassion and mercie, slow to anger, and of great kindnesse.*

Againe, consider the excellencie of this vertue, many waies set forth unto us in the booke of God. As Proverbs 14. 29. *Hee that is slow to wrath is of great wisdom:* and Prov. 15. 18. *It appeaseth strife.* Prov. 16. 32. *He that is slow unto anger, is better than the mightie man: and hee that ruleth his owne minde, is better than hee that winneth a citie:* No Conqueror so mightie as hee that subdues his owne passions. Prov. 19. 11. *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and his glory is to passe by an offence.*

Howsoever then the world esteemes long suffering a note of folly, and want of wisdom, yet let us rest in the testimonie of the holy Ghost, that it is true discretion and wisdom to put up injuries, and to passe by offences. Let us endeavour to adorne our selves with this goodly ornament of long suffering, which indeed declares true wisdom, is a note of true valour and strength: and (which is chiefly to be remembred of us) it makes us like to God himselfe, and so brings comfort to our owne soules. Let us think on these things, and bee hereby stirred up to the putting on of this excellent vertue.

Now here a scruple is to be removed, in that the Apostle saith, *Put on long suffering*, and hee speakes indefinitely, not limiting his speech (as you see) to a long suffering of some kinde of injuries.

Hereupon a doubt may rise. Some may say, why? Some kinde of injuries are such, as if we suffer them but a little time, we hazard the losse of our lives, and the utter overthrow of our state: and therefore we doubt whether wee are to be long suffering in respect of them, or no.

For removal of this doubt, we must learne a difference of offences and wrongs.

Some are light offences, such words and deedes as onely offend us without any losse or hurt to us, and these we are to tread under our feete, and to passe by as though they were never spoke nor done: and of these is that place to be understood, Prov. 19. 11. *It is a mans honour to passe by an offence.*

The second sort of offences there be that are more than offensive (namely) such as bring some small hurt to our goods, life, or good names, and these wee may take notice of by the example of Christ, Ioh. 8. 40. but withall we must doe as he there did, put them up, and be long suffering in respect of them.

A third sort of injuries there be that goe yet further, (namely) such as bring danger to our lives or estates, either in our goods or bodies, and these wee may take notice of, and we may seeke a lawfull remedie against them, sooner or later, according to the knowne danger of them: yet so, as in our seeking a lawfull remedie against them, wee still carrie in us meeke and quiet spirits: for even in seeking a remedie against great injuries, such as endanger our lives or states, we are to be long suffering, that is, of quiet spirits; wee must take heed that wee nourish not in us a lust of revenge, when wee seeke the righting of some great wrong, by lawfull and appointed meanes. The Apostle hath taught us, Rom. 12. 19. that wee must not avenge our selves, vengeance is the Lords right, and we may not encroach on it, either by thought, word or deed.

Verf. 13. *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any have a quarrell to another: even as Christ forgave you, even so doe ye.*

IN this verse our Apostle comes to shew wherein the two last named vertues, (namely) meekenesse, and long suffering, are to bee declared, and hee sets downe distinctly two things, wherein they are to be expressed and manifested.

First, in forbearing one another. And

Uu 4

Secondly,

A doubt.

Answer.
Difference of
offences and
wrongs.

12

1

2

3

Interpre-
tation.What forbea-
ring one ano-
ther is.What things
we are not to
tolerate in o-
thers.**Doctrine 1.**

We are to ma-
nifest our
meeknesse in
our quiet bea-
ring with the
infirmities of
our brethren,
and with their
passions and
perturbations,
so farre forth
as they are dis-
pleasing to us.

Vse.

Secondly, in forgiving one another.

And the second of these he doth further amplify.

First, by the matter of forgiveness, that wee ought to forgive one another, and that is matter of quarrell, generally propounded, *If any man have a quarrell to another.*

Secondly, by an argument enforcing such forgiveness, taken from the example of Christ: wherein is also expressed the manner of forgiveness, that it ought to be as Christ forgave us, *Even as Christ forgave you, even so doe ye.*

These be the heads and generall things contained in this verse, come wee to speake of them as they lye in order, and first, of *Forbearing one another.*

Touching this we must know, that to forbear is (according to the nature of the word here used) with patience to suffer and tolerate such things in our brethren, as are troublesome and grievous unto us; for the proper object of toleration or forbearance, is the displeasing disposition or behaviour of our brethren, their disposition and manners that are offensive and grievous to us: and so the meaning of the Apostle, when hee saith, *Forbearing one another,* as if hee had said, tolerating, or suffering with patience such things in one another as are offensive to you, supposing one another in love: for so the word is rendered, Ephes. 4. 2. Supporting or bearing one with another in such things as are found in your brethren troublesome and grievous unto you.

Here then we may easily see, what is the dutie laid before us (namely) this, that wee are to manifest and expresse our meeknesse and long suffering in a patient sufferance, and toleration of such things in our brethren as are troublesome and grievous unto us, in a quiet bearing with their displeasing disposition and manners: and that wee bee not deceived in this dutie, know wee more particularly, that our meeknesse ought to be expresse in tolerating and bearing the infirmities and frailties of our brethren, appearing in their outward actions, as their hastinesse, slownesse, rashnesse, forwardnesse, or their passions and perturbations, appearing likewise in their actions onely, so farre forth as they are displeasing unto us, or doe therein wrong us.

Wee are not indeede to tolerate and suffer the open offences and finnes of men, but wee are to admonish and reprove them for the same, keeping our selves within the compasse of our callings, yea if so bee Gods glorie bee called in question, or the salvation of men bee like to bee hindered, wee are then for a time to lay aside meeknesse, and to put on severitie. Wee read that *Moses* (the meekest man on the earth) when hee saw the people of God worshipping the golden Calfe, was so incensed with anger, that hee brake the two Tables in peeces beneath the Mountaine, Exodus 32. 19. hee tooke his sword, and (together with the sonnes of *Levi*) slew three thousand of the people the same day, as wee finde verse 28. Yea, Christ himselfe though he would not breake a bruised reede, yet when hee had to deale with the great corruption of the Scribes and Pharisees, he denounced woe upon woe, *Mat. 23. 13.* So then the dutie is thus to be conceived:

Wee are to manifest our meeknesse, and our quiet suffering and bearing with the infirmities of our brethren, as their hastinesse, slownesse, or other passions and perturbations, appearing in their actions, so farre forth, as they are displeasing to us: and this is it that wee are exhorted to, Ephesians 4. vers. 2. That wee support and beare up one another in love, in regard of infirmities. And Galat. 6. 2. saith the Apostle, *beare one anothers burthen:* meaning such things in our brethren as are like burthens, even troublesome and grievous unto us.

Now before wee come to presse this dutie, wee may heereby easily see, that such persons are farre from Christian meeknesse, who will not forbear their brethren in the least thing that may be.

Yea

Yea, some there be, whose mouths (publishing their owne shame) stick not to say, I cannot forbear, I must needs speake my mind: yea, some are growne so shamelesse, as to say, I will not forbear him, say what you can, and, hee shall have as good as he brings; I can be as hot and hasty as he for his life.

Surely, they that thus speake, are far from Christian meekenesse and long suffering, and as yet can have no assurance that they are in the number of the elect of God, and that they are beloved of God in Christ.

Now then to stir us up to the practice of the duty laid before us:

Consider wee first the necessity of this duty of forbearance, how needfull a thing it is to beare with the infirmities of our brethren, and with their displeasing passions, so farre forth as they are displeasing to us; it is so necessary, and of so great use and consequence, as without it wee cannot leade a quiet and comfortable life, in any society; if one be as hot, as hasty, or as forward as another, there can be no comfortable fellowship in any society, neither (indeed) where that is, can any society be firme and durable.

And againe, consider the benefit that comes by bearing with the frailties of our brethren. We thereby (many times) turne away much hurt from our selves and others, for (as Solomon saith,) *Prov. 18. 6. a foolish lips commeth strife*: It is not so much the occasion given, as lips that make strife: it is not so much the hastinesse of the one, as the hot reply of another, that maketh a quarrellous contention, which by forbearance may be avoided: yea, we bearing with our brethren sometimes for the present, may after ward (the passion once overpast) have any reasonable contentment at their hands: yea, sometimes by forbearing thy brother for a time, thou maist (shortly after) have him voluntarily (and of his owne accord) acknowledge his faults to thee.

And consider further, that the poore oftentimes forbear the rich, the subjects the Magistrate, the base the noble, either for feare of hurt, or hope of some good: and ought not we (much more for conscience sake) to frame our selves to forbear our brethren?

For conclusion of this point: if wee desire to live a quiet and comfortable life in any society, if wee would turne away much hurt from our selves and others: if we would shew that good conscience is as powerfull in us, as the feare of hurt, or the hope of good is in others, to make us doe that wee ought; then let us in the feare of God bee stirred up to manifest our meekenesse and long-suffering, in tolerating and bearing with the infirmities of our brethren, and their passions appearing in their actions, so farre forth as they are displeasing to us.

Before we come to the second thing here mentioned, observe that the Apostle makes christian forbearance a mutuall and reciprocall duty; he saith, *forbearing one another mutually, or by course*. Giving us to understand, that every one hath sometimes need to be borne: even the best have need (oftentimes) to be supported and borne withall.

For (indeed) the best have not only their infirmities in performance of holy duties (and therefore we find that men of rare graces, and great strength have used the helpe of others to strengthen them; as *Moses* uses the helpe of *Aar*, a man farre inferiour to himselfe, *Exod. 17. 12.*)

But they have in them such things as are troublesome, grievous, and offensive to their brethren; they are either too selfe-conceited, abounding in their owne sense, or somewhat hasty, or the like; and therefore have need sometimes to be borne withall; in which case a mutuall forbearing one of another is very necessary.

Doest thou then see thy brother at this time too selfe-conceited, a little hasty, or the like? beare with that his infirmity now, and he may haply beare with thee in the like case another time, and beare thou with his dulnesse, and hee will

Such as will not forbear, their brethren in the least thing, are far from Christian meeknesse.

Motives to stir us up to this duty of forbearance, are three

2

Doct. 2.

Every one hath need sometimes to be borne.

Reason.

Vs.

Beare with the infirmity of thy bro-

ther now, and
he may haply
beare with
thee in like
case another
time.

Note.

What it is to
forgive one
another.

Doct. 3.

We are to ex-
presse our
meeknesse, in
remitting all
revenge for
injuries done
unto us, in not
requiting evill
for evill, nor
returning pu-
nishment in
way of requi-
tall.

True and right
forgiveness one
of another.

Vse.

We are to
practise this
duty.

Carnall rea-
sonings a-
gainst it.

Answer un-
to them.

A carnall di-
stinction.

Two motives
to stirre us up
to forgive one
another.

will beare with thy frowardnesse; beare thou with his hastinesse, and hee will beare with thy selfe-conceitednesse, &c.

I passe on to the second thing, wherein meeknesse and long-suffering are to be expressed, namely, in forgiving one another.

And concerning this first, know wee, that forgiveness is more than forbearance: for a man may forbear to revenge an injury, because he wants power to doe it; or it is not expedient for him as yet, he wanting opportunity, or the like; and we know God himselfe suffers the wicked reprobate (for a time) to goe under his long sufferance, but hee forgives them not their finnes; so that forgiveness is more than forbearance, and that we may rightly conceive it (as it is here expressed) according to the proper signification of the word here used by the Apostle. Know we further, that the forgiving one another is a free remission (for so the word signifies) a free remission of revenge, that is, of requiting evill for evill, and of returning punishment in way of requitall, for injuries done to us, either by thought, word, or deed: when we neither carry in us any hatred or purpose of revenge, for wrongs received, nor returne punishment in way of requitall for them, then we forgive.

Here then we see, the duty required of us is this, that wee expresse and make knowne our meeknesse and long-suffering, in remitting all revenge for injuries done, in not requiting evill for evill; nor returning punishment for them in way of requitall, either by thought, word, or deed: for howsoever we may (as before was shewed) seeke and use lawfull remedies against such injuries as are dangerous to our lives, or estate, yet in the use of it, wee may not carry in us a desire of revenge; for that were to make the Magistrate an instrument of our malice: but we must manifest our meeknesse and long-suffering, in putting away all hatred, and remitting all revenge, either by thought, word, or deed; and that is true and right forgiveness one of another.

And this duty the Lord doth often require at our hands, yea, our Saviour Christ requires it should be done (if need be) often times; not seven times, but seventy times seven times, Mat. 18. 22.

And it is that also we doe make continuall profession of, and not only before men, but even before the Lord himselfe, Mat. 6. 12. Luk. 11. 4. *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.* We find this a cleere point, and often urged in the Scripture.

And the use is, the pressing of the practice of this duty; and (indeed) the duty of forgiveness is very needfull to be urged in this age, it is a thing we are hardly drawne unto; there be many oppositions and reasonings of the flesh against it. As (forsooth) the matter is so grievous and so foule, wee could forgive any wrong, and our friends should entreat us for any other thing but this: never remembering how great offences God forgives us: and if we say wee have deserved better at their hands that wrong us; so doth God of us: if wee meant them no harme, no more doth God to us; if we say they are farre our inferiours, what are we (dust and ashes) compared to the Lord? if wee say wee have often forgiven them, with warning to doe so no more; how much oftner hath the Lord forgiven us?

Some againe, being by order of friends, or otherwise moved to forgive, haply they will forgive the fault, but not forget the matter, nor affect the person so offending them, but carry still a purpose of revenge; therefore wee have need often and earnestly to bee stirred up to the practice of this duty, of forgiving one another. And to that purpose consider with mee these two things.

First, wee have heere laid before us the example of Christ: if we had only the example of the holy Prophets or Apostles, and other holy servants of God, ought we not to be moved by the example of so many worthy persons to forgive

give one another? how much more having the example of the Sonne of God to draw us to it.

Against, consider that forgiveness one of another, is an undoubted and infallible argument to perswade our consciences, that we likewise have our sinnes remitted and forgiven; and without that, we not onely have no such assurance, but on the contrary have just cause to feare, that the Lord will pursue us to the utmost for our sins, according to that fearefull parable, Mat. 18. 24. to the end of the chapter.

Now then lay these two things together: consider, that Christ Iesus hee suffered and bare the infinite wrath of his Father, even all that was due to all and every one of Gods chosen: it cost him the shedding of his dearest blood to procure remission of our sinnes.

Now we for our parts may forgive one another, without either cost or paine yea we cannot doe it but with unspeakable comfort, even thereby assuring our owne hearts of the pardon and forgiveness of our owne sinnes. Oh then who is it that will not bee perswaded to such a duty, wherein Christ himselfe hath gone before him? It is a duty full of sweet comfort: thinke upon it, and be stirred up: (in the feare of God by the example of Christ, and for thine owne comfort) to forgive thy brother: put away all hatred and purpose of revenge for injuries received, goe not about to requite evill for evill, by thought, word, or deed.

Come we to the application of this duty, of forgiving one another. And first (as wee said) it is further laid before us, by the matter of forgiveness, in these words (*if any have a quarrell to another*) the matter of forgiveness is matter of quarrell: the word (*quarrell*) is onely needfull here to be explained: and touching that, know wee that by (*quarrell*) in this place, is meant any just cause of complaint, when a man hath just cause to complaine of some offence, of some injurie or wrong offered or done to him by another; and so the meaning is briefly this, if any one have just cause to complaine of an injurie or wrong offered or done to him by another.

Here then observe we, that the Apostle doth limit forgiveness one of another to matter of quarrell; he bounds our forgiveness one of another, upon just cause of complaint, on matter of offence, and of injurie, offered or done to us by our brethren: this is to be marked of us, it gives some light for the understanding of that, how we may be said to remit and forgive the trespasses of our brethren, as we are taught to pray, namely, not as they are properly sins and transgressions of Gods Law (for so the remission of them belongs onely to the Lord, and no man is able to doe it) but wee forgive the trespasses of our brethren, as they give to us just cause of complaint, as they are injuries and wrongs, bringing detriment and hurt to us, either in body, goods, or good name; so men may remit without impeachment, or derogation from Gods glory. A man doth remit the trespasses of his brethren, when he doth remit the injurie and harme rising from them to himselfe, together with all the conceived anger and malice for the same.

Now in that the Apostle doth subjoyne to forgiving one another, the matter of forgiveness in these termes (*if any man have a quarrell to another*) if any man have just cause of complaint against another: wee easily see thus much to our consideration: that we are to forgive our brethren, even then when we have just cause to complaine of them, in regard of some injury or wrong offered or done to us by them: we are then to forgive, when we have just cause of offence & quarrel.

Wee finde the question thus propounded by Peter, Mat. 18. 21. *Master, how often shall my brother sinne against mee, and I shall forgive him?* and Luk. 17. 4. *saith our Saviour, though thy brother sin against thee, though thy brother offend thee, and thou have just cause of complaint against him seven times in a day,* and

How we forgive the trespasses of our brethren.

Doct. 4
We are then to forgive our brethren, when we have just cause of offence and quarrell.

and seven times a day turne againe to thee, saying, It repenteth mee, & thou shalt forgive him.

Reason.

The reason and ground of this duty is very plaine, namely this: Then is the fit time for the exercise and shewing forth of any practicall grace or vertue, when there is matter offered, and just occasion given for the practice of it: for example, when there is a triall of a mans patience, by some thing provoking and stirring him up to impatiency, then is the fit time for the exercise of his patience, when there is meane and provocation to ryot and excesse, then is the fit time for a man to shew himselfe sober and temperate, and so is it in this particular.

Vse.

Reprooffe of
such as regard
not this duty,
but plead
against it.

Then is the fit time to shew forth our meeknesse, in forgiving our brethren, when they offend and wrong us either in word or deed.

Therefore we are to forgive one another, even then when we have just cause to complaine one of another, this duty is little regarded in the world. May wee not often heare it out of the mouthes of some, yea they hold it a good plea, and sufficient defence for themselves (say they) may wee not serve him as hee hath served us, and deale with him, as he hath dealt with us? and being reproved for their violence in speech and behaviour, expressing their cankered and revengefull mindes; why (say they) judge you of it, they dare appeale to the judgment of him that reprooves them, have we not just cause? have wee not reason for it thus to be moved, and thus to speake, and thus to deale? we would gladly be quiet, but wee have just cause given us to be thus unquiet.

See how contrary our corrupt reasoning of the flesh is, to the wisdom of the holy Ghost.

Admit this, thou hast just cause to be offended, to complaine of thy brother, in regard of some injurie done to thee; yet behold and consider how the holy Ghost hath cut off that which thy crooked and corrupt reason is ready thereupon to inferre, that because thou hast just cause, therefore thou mayest shew thy selfe violent and revengefull, and carry in thee a distempered mind: no, no, (saith the holy Ghost) if thou have a quarrell to thy brother, thou art to forgive him, and then is the fit time to forgive thy brother, when thou hast just cause of offence given thee from him: thinke on it whosoever thou art, that art ready to follow the crooked rule of thine owne reason: and remember, that though thine owne wisdom tell thee, that thou having just cause of offence, maist shew thy selfe violent and revengefull; yet the word of God, by which one day thou shalt be judged, hath taught thee otherwise.

Note.

And againe: If thou alwaies deale with thy brother, as thou hast just cause, surely, thou maist looke the Lord will not remit any thing of the rigour of his justice towards thee, and then thy case is most miserable, thou art then but a child of perdition.

Remember it, and be stirred up even then to forgive thy brother, when thou hast just cause to complaine of him, for some injurie by him offered unto thee.

Come we now to the argument enforcing this dutie of forgiving one another, from the example of Christ, in these words, *Even as Christ forgave you, so doe ye.*

*Interpre-
tation.*

These words (for the meaning of them) need not long to be stood on; onely we are to examine how Christ forgiveth us: and touching that, know we that Christ may be considered two wayes: either as a Mediator, God and man in one person, and so he satisfied for our sinnes, and procured remission of the sins of all Gods chosen, and hee it is by whom, and thorow whom, or for whose sake (as the Apostle speakes, Ephes. 4.32. they have forgiveness of sinnes. Or as God the Sonne, the second person in the Trinity, of the same essence with the Father, and so doth he properly forgive sinnes; according to that assertion of

of the Pharisees, not denied by Christ, Mark. 2. 7. None can forgive sinnes, but God onely. So the meaning of the Apostle in saying, as Christ forgave you, is, as if hee had said: As God in Christ forgave you, which agrees with that, 2. Corinth. 5. 19. God was in Christ and reconciled the world to himselfe, not imputing their sinnes unto them.

Now first, here wee see the argument laide before us, is from the example of Christ, that we are to forgive one another, as Christ hath forgiven us. I might hence take occasion to speake of our imitation of Christ in generall, but that is not so proper to this place: only know we thus much, that the actions of Christ are of three sorts.

First, such as are proper to his Godhead, as to work miracles, to forgive sinnes, and the like: and these are to be acknowledged of us, to confirme our faith touching his Godhead, but not to be imitated.

The second sort of the actions of Christ, are his workes of mediation, as to satisfie for sinne, to make intercession for us, and the like: and these likewise wee are to acknowledge, and beleeve to our comfort, but not to take upon us to imitate.

A third sort of his actions be those, which Christ did as man under the Law, even workes commanded in the Law of God: and in these indeed wee are to imitate Christ. In obedience to the Morall law only, are we to follow Christ, and to tread in his steps,

And therefore it is but a fancie and dreame of the Papists, that we are to imitate Christ in his fourtie daies fast, it is but a vanishing speculation of their owne braines. I leave them, and come to speake of that which is more proper to these words: and for concluding of the point, wee are to consider these words, *Even as Christ forgave you, even so doe ye*, together with that, Ephes. 4. 32. *Forgiving one another, even as God for Christs sake forgave you*: or this text, as before wee expounded it, *As God in Christ forgave you*.

Hence wee may easily gather, that remission of sinnes once granted, remaines for ever, it is unchangeable. For why? God forgives sinnes, and he forgives in, and through Christ, even for Christ his sake. Remission of sinnes comes from Gods free grace and love, and it comes in, and through the sonne of his love: Chap. 1. 13. and his love in Christ never changeth, and therefore remission of sins is most certaine and unchangeable.

And this is a ground of sweet and excellent comfort to all such as have the assurance of the pardon of their sinnes.

Hast thou any assurance of the pardon of thy sinnes? remember it then to thy comfort, that remission of sinnes comes from God, and it comes to thee through Christ, in whom he is well pleased, and that for ever: and therefore the remission of thy sinnes remaines for ever.

Yea, may some say, remission of sinnes once granted, remaines for ever, and the assurance of it is full of sweet comfort, but wee cannot come to the knowledge and assurance of the remission of our sinnes. Indeed, the Papists doe so teach, and it is a reasoning of the flesh, often rising in the mindes of some.

But for to answer it, I will goe no further than this very text: if wee cannot come and be assured that our sinnes are forgiven, then the Apostles argument is not good, here urging us to forgiveness one of another. For make it, hee persuades us to forgive one another as Christ hath forgiven us. Now how shall I forgive my brother, as God in Christ hath forgiven me, if I cannot be sure of his mercie in the forgiveness of mine owne sinnes? Hee that doubts, whether God in Christ hath forgiven him, or no, how shall hee apply himselfe therein to be like to Christ? And how shall hee finde and see himselfe bound to forgive his brethren, as Christ hath forgiven him? And therefore without question, the example of Christ set before us for imitation, doth plainly teach that

Christ his actions are of three sorts.

1
In two sorts of actions we are not to imitate Christ.

3
Wherein wee are to imitate Christ.

A Popish fancie touching imitation of Christ.

Doct. 5.
Remission of sinnes once granted, remaines for ever.

Vse.
Comfort to such as are assured of the pardon of their sinnes.

Object.

Answer.

wee may be assured of it that God in Christ hath forgiven us our finnes, and having such assurance we are to remember to our comfort, that forgiveness of finnes, once granted, it remains for ever, because Gods love in Christ to his chosen never changeth. Meditate hereupon to thy comfort, thou that hast any assurance of the pardon of thy finnes.

Marke further, that the Apostle doth not onely urge us to forgive one another by the example of Christ, but hee doth also presse upon us to forgive, as Christ hath forgiven us, (*Even as Christ forgave you, even so doe ye.*) Which word (*as*) doth not import *Equalitie*, but *Similitude*. Wee are to forgive one another as God in Christ hath forgiven us: I might here runne into a large field, but I will onely point at some things briefly.

Hence we are taught: that our forgiveness one of another must bee free; wee are not to forgive upon condition or consideration, upon the suite of friends, upon the importunitie of the party or the like, but freely and without any by-respect, as God hath forgiven us: yea wee are to bee like to God, especially in this, in forgiving the whole offence and injurie. That which God forgives wholly and never after imputes it, so are wee to forgive our brethren, not carrying a peece of injurie unforgiven, not reserving in our mindes part of a wrong till afterward.

If we so doe our case is most fearefull, and when we use that petition, *Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors*, wee most fearefully pray against our selves; dost thou open thy mouth, and call to the Lord to forgive thee as thou forgiveest thy brother, and dost thou reserve a peece of thy malice against thy brother? Surely thou dost beseech the Lord to reserve a part of his wrath against thee, and that is a fearefull thing, that thine owne mouth should so call for vengeance to be poured downe upon thy selfe, the least part of his wrath is able to crush thee, and to presse thee downe to the bottome of hell; Thinke on it, and as thou desirest that the Lord should wholly forgive thee, so doe thou fully and wholly forgive thy brother: let not thy owne tongue bee so dreadfully used against thy selfe.

Verf. 14. *And above all things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.*

Our Apostle having exhorted to tender mercy, &c. verse 12. and shewed overf. 13. wherein meeknesse and long suffering are to be expressed: in this 14 and 15. verses following, hee goes on further to exhort the Colossians to two other vertues by comparison (namely to *Love* in this verse, and to *Peace* the fruit of love in the verse following.

Here therefore he exhorts them to put on love, and that not simply, but by a comparison with the forenamed vertues, even to put on love, as a more excellent and precious vertue than any before named, or as the uppermost, and so the fairest, richest, and most precious peece of the new clothing, *And above all these things*, saith the Apostle, *put on love*.

Then he doth further amplify his exhortation by a description of love, setting it out by the excellent use of it, that it serves as a bond, that it is the bond of perfection; That is the generall matter of this verse.

Come wee to examine the words touching the true sense and meaning of them (*Above all these things*) that is, above all these forenamed vertues, *Put on love*. The Apostle doth heere still continue his Metaphor, taken from the cloathing of the bodie, and hee compares love to the uppermost garment, that it is to bee put on with, and above all the rest of the clothings, and his meaning is with all other vertues, *put on love*, and that principally, as the uppermost garment, and chiefest part of that glorious vesture of the new man, and by love wee are to understand, love to our brethren, love of

Christ
to
us
and
others

Doct. 6. I
We must free-
ly forgive one
another.

Use.
The fearefull
state of such as
doe not wholly
forgive their
brethren disco-
vered.

Doct. 7.
Remission of
finnes once
granted, is
never
lost.

Doct. 8.
Comfort to
such as are
troubled of
their
finnes.

Doct. 9.

Interpre-
tation.

one another, (*which is the bond of perfection*) the word here translated (*bond*) signifieth not such a bond as doth tie one thing to another, but properly such a bond as doth couple, conjoyne, binde, and unite many things together, and is to bee rendred (couple, or conjunction) *bond of perfection*, that is, according to the true and naturall signification of that word (of integrity, or as I may say, of wholenesse: for it signifieth the wholenesse of any body, either naturall, morall, or civill, when any body is a compleat and whole body, consisting of all the parts of it, then it is a perfect body.

Now the integrity or wholenesse heere spoken of is to be understood with relation both to the vertues before spoken of, and to all other Christian vertues and duties that passe from man to man, which altogether make as it were one perfect body, and with relation to the body of the Church, consisting of divers members: that love is the couple, conjunction or knitting together of all Christian vertues and duties of man, to man, and making them as it were one perfect body, and conjoyning also the members of the Church one to another, and making them one whole and perfect body, coupling together the members of the whole Church, yea conjoyning the members of every particular Church, yea of every society in the Church, that is the meaning of the Apostle when hee saith, *Love is the bond of perfection*.

Thus then we are to conceive his meaning in the words of this verse, as if he had said: And with these, and all other vertues and duties that passe from man to man, put on love one to another, as the most excellent part of that glorious vesture of the new man, which love doth unite and knit together all Christian vertues and duties that passe from man to man, making them as one perfect body, and coupling together all members of the whole Church, yea, the members of every particular Church and societie, and so perfecting the whole Church, making it a perfect body, and perfecting every particular Church, yea, every societie in the Church.

Now, first note with me in a word, that the Apostle doth here exhort to put on Love as a part of the new man.

Hence it is cleere. That true Christian love of our brethren is not in us by nature, there is no inclination in us by nature to love our brethren aright: no certainly, true love of our brethren is a renewed affection, whereby we are moved to wish, speake, and doe well unto them.

It is reckoned as one of the fruits of the Spirit, Gal. 5. 22. and 1. Tim. 1. 5. The Apostle saith, it comes out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfained; and indeed the will and affections must be changed, before there be any place for true love.

And this meets with that error of the papists, who teach that the first act of love is in us by nature, and that wee have in us by nature an inclination to love both God and men, and that onely the second act, or exercise of love is from grace. This is but their conceit, it cannot stand with the evidence and truth of the word of God in this text, and in many other places.

And againe this teacheth us: That wee can never love our brethren truly and aright (as wee ought) till wee bee changed and renewed by the Spirit of God.

A naturall man may love others, in respect of the honor, profit or pleasure he receives from them: or the Lord by his speciall providence may dispose the hart of a naturall man to affect others, yea to doe good to them as is said, Dan. 1. 9. God brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the chiefe of the Eunuchs, and Nebuchadnezzar shewed him great favour and highly advanced him, Daniel chapter 2. vers. 48. But a naturall man can never truly and aright affect others, and love them in the Lord, and as they beare his image, that is onely the worke of the Spirit of God: and therefore if we would truly

Doct. 1.
True Christian love of our brethren is not in us by nature.

U^{pe}.
It is a popish error that the first act of love is in us by nature.

V^{se}. 2.
We can never love our brethren as wee ought, till we be renewed by the Spirit of God.

Note.

love and affect our brethren, wee must labour to bee renewed.

Observe in the next place, that the Apostle exhorts to put on love, not simply, but by comparison with the vertues foregoing, as a more excellent grace, than any of those forenamed: he saith (*Put on love above all*) put on love chiefly and principally, above all these.

Where first we see, that love stands in comparison with such graces and vertues as have relation to men, and have their use in Christian life and conversation amongst men, that in respect of such graces and vertues, love is to be put on above them all, as a more excellent grace.

Hence we are given to understand thus much: That the excellencie and pre-ferment of love above other graces, is in respect of such graces as have relation to men, and have use in Christian life and conversation among men: love is not more excellent, neither is it here nor any where else in Scripture, simply preferred above all graces whatsoever, (for in Gods sight and acceptation, faith excels it, not in any dignitie in it selfe, but in respect of the object of it) so I say, love is not more excellent than any other grace whatsoever, but it is the chiefe grace and vertue in Christian life and conversation, and more excellent than any of those graces that have relation to men.

This I note in a word, to teach us how wee are to understand it, when wee finde love so highly commended in the Scripture (namely) not as the forme and life of faith, as the Papists teach falsely and erroneously, but as the most excellent grace among those that have relation to men, and have use in Christian life and conversation.

Object. It is preferred before faith, as a more excellent grace: 1. Cor. 13. 13.

Ans. Love is there prefer'd before faith, not as a more excellent grace in it selfe, but in the use of it, and that only in respect of men.

Because it makes good workes done to men profitable to them, and referred to a right end in regard of men. And that is the meaning of the Apostle.

In that the Apostle doth exhort, to put on love above all these, and other graces that have relation to men, we may easily see thus much laid before us.

That love one of another is a most precious fruit of faith, for faith worketh by love, Gal. 5. 6. and love is the most excellent grace that comes from faith.

And hence is it that the Apostle Peter, 1. Per. 4. 8. agrees with our Apostle, and doth second him in his exhortation, and saith, *above all things have fervent love among you*: he preferres love before all other graces, and that justly: for indeed without love, what duties soever wee performe to our brethren are nothing worth, as the Apostle shewes plainly and at large, 1. Cor. 13. and the Lord him selfe doth so account of love to our brethren, that if a man were readie to come to his immediate worship, hee is content that dutie to him should rather be left undone, than that the dutie of love should be neglected to our brethren, as our Saviour teacheth plainly, Matth. 5. 23. 24. *If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberst that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thine offering before the altar, and goe thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.* I might bee large in setting forth the excellencie of that worthy grace of love one to another, but I chuse rather to settle the consideration of the excellencie of it upon our hearts, and to make use of it to our selves, in that love to our brethren is so excellent a grace.

Wee must learne to esteeme it, and to prize it above all other vertues that have relation to men, and to breathe after it as the most excellent fruit of faith: we are fallen into that age of the world our Saviour foretold, Mat. 24. 12. *where in the love of many is growne cold*: and no doubt this amongst others is one speciall reason of it, men have not that high esteeme of love to their brethren as they ought, they account it not as the most excellent ornament, and to be put on above all other vertues that have relation to men, most men doe esteeme the love

Doct. 2.

Love is more excellent than any of those graces that have relation to men.

Vse.

How we are to understand the high commendation of love in the Scripture.

Object.

Answer.

Reason.

Doct. 3.

Love of our brethren is a most precious fruit of faith.

Vse.

We must esteeme love to our brethren as a most excellent fruit of faith, above all other vertues that have relation to men.

love of their brethren but as a base thing, yea, an argument of an abject and base mind to put on love, with the properties and fruits of it, mentioned 1. Cor. verf. 13. as not to disdaine and not to be provoked to anger: yea, are there not some who make the least account of it of any thing to beare true love to their brethren? Haply they have many other good qualities, they are sober, wise, judicious, and able to give good counsell, but as for true love to their brethren, they have no dramme of that, and they make no reckoning of it, yea, they esteeme it nothing, to carry in their hearts the contrary, even hatred, malice, heart-burning against their brethren: too many such there be in the world, and therefore we have need to be taught this lesson, and often to heare of it, that we are to esteeme love of our brethren as the most excellent vertue amongst those that have relation to men.

And to settle this in our hearts, let us often thinke on that before spoken, that (without love) all other vertues and duties performed to men are nothing worth.

2. And againe, consider that our Saviour makes it the very character, badge, and cognisance by which wee may be knowne to be his Disciples, Ioh. 13. 35. *By this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another*: by this you shall make it cleere to the world that you are my Disciples. Let these things bee often thought on, that the consideration of them may worke it into our hearts, even highly to esteeme of love, to account it (as indeed it is) that grace, amongst those that have relation to men, that doth most grace and commend us, and so to follow after love, 1. Corinth. 14. 1. and to labour to put on love above all other graces whatsoever.

Marke further that the Apostle exhorts to put on love above all those vertues before named. Hence we are taught:

That love must be as the cloathing of every one of the graces before spoken of, yea of every grace, vertue and dutie that passeth from man to man; every grace, vertue and dutie of man to man must come from love, and must bee apparelled in the habit of love. For why? the vertues before named, and the like may be in the heathen, and were no doubt in many heathen men: they may be pittifull, kinde, modest, full of mercie: and many excellent vertues, and duties may proceede from some other roote, beside love: the Apostle hath made it cleere, 1. Cor. 13. A man may speake as with the tongue of men and Angels, and not a word out of love, he may doe such things as shall bee rewarded at the day of judgement, and yet not of love.

The use then of this point is this: Wee are to looke that all our vertues (that have reference to men) bee clothed in the habit of love to our brethren. Art thou pittifull, kinde, &c. looke that thy pittie and kindnesse bee clad in the garment of love, put on that above them all, and whatsoever good dutie thou doest in thy generall or particular calling, let it be done in love. And to helpe us forward in this dutie, consider we only these two things.

First, the graces here named and the like, may in the use of them be profitable to others without love, but never will they be conformable to thine own soule.

Againe, consider that many good duties bring not that fruite to others that they might, being not done in love, because they want the blessing of God, on them. For example, a man justly corrects his childe or servant, not in love, and for the good of the childe or servant, but out of his disordered humour, respecting the satisfying of his owne irefull and furious minde, or having an eye onely to his owne profit, or the like: that dutie is not blessed to the childe or servant, but they still remaine as carelesse and wretchlesse as ever they were before. I might instance in many other particulars: but to shur up all in a word, doest thou desire that thy pittie, thy kindnesse, and thy humblenesse of minde, should be comfortable to thy selfe, and that duties done by thee should bring forth fruit

Motives to stir us up highly to esteeme of love to our brethren.

Doct. 4.

Every grace, vertue and dutie that passeth from man to man must come from love, and must be clothed in the habit of love.

Reason.

Vse.

We must looke that all our vertues that have relation to men, be clothed in the habit of love to our brethren. Two motives to that purpose.

Doct. 5.

True Christi-
an love to men
is as a bond
knitting toge-
ther the mem-
bers of the
Church and
all Christian
graces, vertues
and duties,
that passe from
man to man.

Note.

and profit, then looks that they all come from love, and bee clothed in the habit of love: and end with the words of the Apostle, 1. Cor. 16. 14. *Let all your things be done in love*, that so they may bring comfort to our selves, and we may finde the blessing of God on them.

In the description of love to our brethren, in these words (*which is the bond of perfection*) we see an excellent use of love to men laid before us, that it serves as a bond, knitting together the members of the Church, yea, knitting together all Christian graces, vertues and duties, that passe from man to man, making them (as it were) one perfect body. Love is the bond of that neere conjunction of the members of the Church one to another, and it is the bond of fellowship and communion that is betwene them; it makes one member partaker of the graces and gifts of another, and that which is wanting in one member, is supplied by the use of that grace and gift that is found in another through love, and so love serves as a bond, knitting together the members of the Church, and knitting together all graces and gifts found in them, as into one body for howsoever the gifts and graces found in the members of the Church, are all for the good of one another, and every member hath right and title to them, and may challenge an interest in them all: there is not a grace or gift in any one member of the Church, but another that wants it, hath right to it, in the use of it, as the Apostle teacheth plainly, 1. Cor. 3. 21. 22. *All things are yours, whether it be Paul, or Apollus, or Cephus, or the world, or life, or death: whether they be things present, or things to come, even all are yours.* As if he had said: *What gift or grace soever is bestowed on Paul, or Apollus, or Cephus, you may challenge it as your own, in the use of it.* Howsoever (I say) this is true, that whatsoever gift or grace is in one member of the Church, another member that wants it, hath right to it, in the use of it: yet without love, the gifts and graces that bee in the members of the Church, are not used for the good one of another: the Apostle saith, 1. Cor. 8. 1. *Knowledge without love puffeth up*: and it is true of other gifts of the like kinde, Arts, Wisdom, &c. that without love they are not used for the good of others: but it is love that edifieth, it is love that makes them profitable, and rightly applied, for the building up of the body of Christ: and so love both knits together the members of the Church, and makes the graces and gifts (that are in severall members) profitable.

Yea, love doth so conjoyne the graces and gifts of the severall members in the use of them, as if they were all in one man, and so makes (as it were) of severall graces and gifts a perfect body. Acts 4. 32. it is there said that the multitude of believers were of one heart: which no doubt was through love, they were so utterly conjoynd by love one to another, as if there had been but one heart and one soule in them all.

And so without question, the gifts and graces that were in them severally, were by love so knit together in the use of them, as if they had been all in one heart, and in one soule, and so by love made as if it were one perfect body: which is an excellent use of true Christian love to men.

To draw this to some profitable use:

First know wee that there is an imputation commonly cast on our Church by the Papists, that wee strip true love (to our brethren) and the duties of love, of all good use in the Church of God: yea, that we hold them unprofitable and unnecessary for Christians.

And why so? Forsooth, because we ascribe not to them the merit of our justification in Gods sight. See the wilfull blindness of such as are devoted to their owne pleasing conceits, they doo so much on the merit of love and good works, as they cannot (or at least will not) see any other use of them, but that which must needs shrouder out Gods grace, and the merits of Christ: wee willingly acknowledge that profitable and necessarie use of love of others heere

specified

Use. 1.
A popish im-
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monly cast up-
on our Church
removed.

specified by the Apostle, that it serves as a bond of integrity or perfectness, even to knit together the members of the Church, and to make the gifts and graces that are in the members of the Church, as one perfect body, and in their use as profitable, as if they were all in one heart, and in one soule.

Continued
to the
end of
the
Folios.

How highly
we esteeme of
Christian love,
and the duties
of it.

Vse 2.
It is for want
of love that
men are di-
tracted and
drawne asun-
der one from
another.

The excellent
use of love to
our brethren
is to be confi-
dered.

Note.

Doll. 6.
True Christi-
an love is not
perfect in it
selfe, but it is
the bond of
perfection.
Vse.

Yea, wee esteeme of Christian love, and the duties of it, as the beaten high way to eternall life, as testimonies of obedience and thankfulness to God for his mercy, as illustrations of Gods glory, as meanes of much good to our brethren, as proper markes of true Christian profession, as necessary antecedents of the promised reward of eternall glory, as infallible evidences and proofes of remission of sins, and fruits ever following a lively, sound, and saving faith.

Who then fecnot, that most excellent and precious is the use of love, with as many amongst us as know and embrace the truth, and truly favour the things of the spirit of God; and therefore it is but a cavelling slander of our adversaries, to say, wee deprive love, and the fruites of it, of all good use in the Church of God, and make no reckoning of them.

For the use of this point to our selves. Is it so, that love to our brethren is as a bond, knitting together the members of the Church, and making the gifts and graces that are in them, as one perfect body?

It is then a plaine evidence that it is for want of love, when men are distracted, and some are carried one way, and some another; yea, it is want of love, which makes us amongst our selves so loose and so uncoupled one to another, that we are as a body out of joynt in many things; it is the want of love that makes us start asunder one from another, on every trifling occasion.

Wee are to acknowledge that our want, and to bewaile it, and to stirre us up to entertaine true love one to another, and (where it is) to increase it.

Consider (I beseech you) this excellent use of it, that it serves to joyne us together as one man; true love will make us speake and thinke one thing; yea, it will make us helpe one another, care one for another, comfort, counsell, and encourage one another in good things, and to use all the good gifts bestowed on us, for the common good one of another, as if they were all in one man.

And let us know, that any society without love, is but as a tottering wall of stones, cobbled up together, without mortar or binding, and so easily shaken, and soone ruinated and throwne downe.

And againe, remember that true love to our brethren, is not onely taught by precept, but it is inwardly implanted in the hearts of all true believers by the spirit, as the Apostle saith, 1. Thes. chap. 4. verf. 9. *Touching brotherly love, ye need not that I should write unto you as if he had said, As naturall brethren (not degenerating and growing out of kinde) are taught by nature to love one another; so you (to whom God hath given his spirit) are taught of God to love one another.*

Let us then (besides the excellent use of love one to another) remember this, that as many as are true believers, have learned of the spirit of God to love one another; and if we have not learned this lesson, surely we are not yet taught of the spirit of God, wee have not yet received the spirit, and having not received his spirit, we are none of his.

Observe wee in the next place, that the Apostle calls love (the bond of perfection) he saith not, put on love, which is perfect; but which is the bond of perfection.

Hence we may easily see, that love that is in true believers (and ought to be put on by them) is not perfect in it selfe, but the bond of it: true Christian love (in the members of Christ) is not a perfection of love, but it is the bond of perfection in the same before shewed.

This I now say in a word, against the lying sect of the family of Love, (indeed

Confutation of
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the grosse abusers of love) who beate themselves much on this text of the Apostle, and conclude, that because the Apostle saith here, love is the bond of perfection, therefore there is a perfection of love in the regenerate in the time of this life.

A meere device of their owne braine: this text will not warrant such a conclusion, it is farre from the meaning of the holy Ghost.

Oh but (say they) will you denie a perfection of love and holinesse in the regenerate, in the time of this life?

Why, the Scripture is pregnant and plaine for it: doe wee not reade? 1. Ioh. 4. 17. *Herein is that love perfect in us, that wee should have boldnesse in the day of judgement.* And againe, ver. 18. *There is no feare in love, but perfect love casteth out feare; for feare hath painfullnesse, and hee that feareth is not perfect in love.* Philip, chap. 3, ver. 15. *Let us therefore as many as bee perfect, be thus minded.*

I answer them: first, it cannot bee denied, but that there is a perfection of holinesse in the regenerate, in the time of this life; but both they and we must understand what kind of perfection it is, namely, a perfection of parts, and not of degrees; or more plaine, there is in them that are truly regenerate (in the time of this life) a measure of sanctity and holinesse in all the faculties of their soules, and in all the parts and members of their bodies; yea, there be in them the beginnings of all vertues, and the seeds of all graces, by which they endeavour to obey God in all his commandements, and so there is in them such an holinesse, as hath in it all the parts of perfect holinesse, such as is seated in every power of their soules, and in every part of their bodies, and that is a perfection of parts; but they have not in them a perfect measure and degree of any part of holinesse, nor an holinesse in any power of the soule, or part of the body, perfect in the measure of it, and so no perfection in degrees: for as the Apostle saith, 1. Cor. 13. 9. *The most regenerate know but in part, and therefore their love, and other graces that are in them, are proportionable, they are but in part, not perfect in the time of this life.*

But for answer to that place, 1. Ioh. 4. 17. on which the Familists beate themselves exceedingly.

First, they can never evince and prove it, that in that place (by love) is meant that love that is in us, that love we beare either to God or man: but rather (by love) is there meant Gods love to us, that is true beleevens, which is said to be perfect in us, in regard of the effect of it, in regard of the use and comfort of it, shed abroad in our hearts: for Iohn saith, ver. 16. *We have knowne, and believed the love that God hath in us, or towards us; and then he goes on still (no doubt) speaking of the same love, and saith, herein is that love perfect in us; but admit that Iohn there speakes of that love that is in us, either towards God or men, and he calles it perfect love. What then? will it thereupon follow, that there is an absolute perfection of love in the regenerate, in the time of this life, & such love as hath no defect in it? No, no, their light braines deceive them, if they so imagine. For by perfect love understanding it of that love that is in us) hee meaneth such love as is true, sound, and unfained, opposed to that which is hollow and hypocritical. And thus we find the word [perfect] expounded, Isai. 38. 3. where *Hezekiah saith, Lord remember mee now, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart: Where wee may easily see, that by perfection of heart, he understandeth truth and sincerity of heart: and so in this place by perfect love is meant sound, true, and unfained love, and such love casteth out feare, even all feare.**

The Familists therefore cannot fasten it on this, or any other place of Scripture, that there is in the regenerate (in the time of this life) an absolute perfection of love: wee are to renounce it as a phantasticall conceit of such

are deluded by the spirit of errour.

There is yet another sect (I meane the Papists) who abuse this description of love, and gather from it a false conclusion. They gather, that because the Apostle saith [*Love is the bond of perfection*] that we are made perfect by love, and justified by love in the sight of God.

But this cannot stand with the true meaning of this description. We shewed before it is thus to be conceived: That love serves as a bond to knit together all Christian vertues and duties that passe from man to man (as it were) into one perfect body; it is a bond of perfection in respect of those vertues and duties that have relation to men; and therefore it cannot bee rightly hence gathered, that love is of use to make perfect in the sight of God.

That conclusion is built on a sandy foundation, and a misconstruction of the Text: but grant this unto them (which they are never able to prove) that true believers have a perfect measure of love, yet can it not justify them in the sight of God: for justification (in Gods sight) stands partly in the remission of sins, and partly in righteousness imputed; or (as the Papists say) inherent righteousness.

Now perfect love in degree cannot procure remission of any one sinne, that is no part of Gods promise annexed to his covenant of workes. Hee saith not, Doe this and thou shalt live; and if thou doe it not, but breake my Law, by perfect love thou shalt satisfie for that breach. No, no, the condition of perfect obedience (in the morall Law propounded) once broken, there can be no compensation, or satisfaction, but by punishment, either in the person offending, or of some other in his stead. Without question, the active obedience of Christ was most exact and perfect, yet was not that perfect, legall, and meritorious obedience of his, sufficient to procure remission of sinnes; but he must over and besides that, suffer death, even the cursed death of the Crosse, and beare in his body and soule the extremity of Gods wrath, before he could satisfie Gods justice for the sinnes of his chosen; and therefore it is said, *He bare our sinnes in his body on the tree*, 1. Pet. chap. 2. vers. 24. We may then safely stand on this against our adversaries, that it is not love (admit it to bee most perfect) that can justify us in the sight of God; because it cannot procure remission of the least sinne.

Verf. 15. *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which ye are called in one body, and be ye amiable.*

IN this verse our Apostle comes to exhort the Colossians to another vertue; namely to peace, the fruit of love: and to this also he exhorts, not simply, but by comparison, that they should have peace in them, and that it should bee as a ruler, and beare principall sway in them: and this exhortation hee doth further amplifie:

First, by the author or kind of peace, that it ought to be the peace of God.

Secondly, by the proper seate where it ought to rule, namely, in their hearts.

And his exhortation being thus propounded, hee doth further strengthen it, and urge it on the Colossians by waight of argument, taken from the condition of their calling, that they were called to this peace, expressed more clearly in those words [*in one body*] wherein also is implied, an argument to perswade them to it, that they were called unto it as members of one body. Last of all (for the better entertainment and continuance of this peace) hee requires of them that they should bee amiable. And so the summe and substance of this verse is:

1 An exhortation to peace, and that, a peace of God, and that it ought to beare rule in their hearts.

It is a false conclusion gathered from hence by the Papists, that wee are made perfect by love, and justified by love in Gods sight.

2 Backed and strengthened by an argument taken from their calling, that they were called unto as members of one body.

3 And then further amplified, by requiring another duty serving for the continuance of that peace, that for the better entertainment and continuance of it, they should be amiable, or gratefull one to another.

Come we to speak of the exhortation, in these words, *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts.*

Interpre-
tation

By the [peace of God] the Apostle meanes not that peace that God himselfe hath, and in which he liveth, but that which he communicateth to us; and that is two fold: the first is that peace we have with God, arising from faith, touching our reconciliation with God; in, and throug Christ; whereof the Apostle speakes, Rom. 5. 1. *Being justified by faith, we have peace towards God throug our Lord Jesus Christ.* And Phil. 4. 7. *The peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall preserve your hearts and mindes in Christ Jesus:* but this peace is not here meant. The other peace is that which we have, or ought to have with men, namely, that concord and good agreement (comming from love) which we ought to have one with another: and of this the Apostle speakes in this place, as may easily appeare, both by the context, and by the scope and drift of the Apostle in this place.

Now this peace is called the peace of God, because God is the Authour of it, both commanding it in his word, and working it in us by his holy Spirit.

[*Rule in your hearts*] The word here translated [rule] properly signifieth to rule after the manner of a judge, or an umpire. It is taken from the custome of the heathen, who in their publike games of wrestling, or the like, had some who sat as judges, and did rule and order the runners, or wrestlers, and gave to them (that did best) some rewards. And the Apostles meaning is, let the peace of God prevaile over all your evill affections, which stirre you up to discord and dissention, and let it beare sway, and have chiefe command of them all, and keep them under.

Thus then we are to conceive the meaning of this exhortation: as if the Apostle had said: (And let that concord and good agreement comming from love (which you ought to have one to another, commanded by God in his word, and wrought in you by his holy Spirit) have the chiefe sway, and prevaile over all your evill affections, by which you are stirred up to discord and dissention, let it be as a commander over them all, and keepe them all in subjection.

Now here, first we are to marke, that the Apostle calls that peace to which he exhorts, (being that peace that is, or ought to bee amongst men) the peace of God, or Gods peace: (saith he) *Let the peace of God* (even that peace that hath God the author, commander, and worker of it) *rule in your hearts.*

Hence it is cleare, that true Christian peace, and good agreement amongst men is, as well as true Christian love, a worke of Gods Spirit: and indeed the Apostle reckons it up amongst the fruits of the Spirit, Gal. 5. 22. And therefore men are not truly peaceable by nature, neither is there any true peace, save among such as are truly sanctified.

True Christi-
an peace is a
fruit of Gods
spirit.

Doct. 1.

The peace and agreement we hold one with another must be Gods peace, even such a peace as is approved of by God in his word.

Note.

Let it suffice onely to have named that, in a word: the point more cleare hence offered is this: the peace and agreement one with another (which we are to entertaine and embrace) must bee Gods peace, even such a peace as hath God the author of it: such a peace as is commanded and approved of, by God in his word: and that we erre not in conceiving this point, thinking that a peace commanded and approved of God which is not.

Know we further more particularly, that the peace and agreement we are to hold and embrace with men, it must be joyned with truth of religion, and with holinesse, it must bee a peace thus qualified, even a peace going hand in hand with truth and holinesse.

And

And hence it is that the Apostle, Rom. 12. 18. doth exhort to peace, not absolutely, but with condition of possibility: *If it be possible (saith he) have peace with all men.* Where he meanes not a possibility of fact: as if he had said, *If it be possible, if it may be done and brought to passe, if you may by any way, or means, have peace with all* (for there is possibility of peace unlawfull) but hee meanes a possibility in respect of right and lawfulness of fact; his meaning is, if it bee possible, and so as you may lawfully, regarding good conscience, if you may have it so, as may stand with holding true faith, and religion towards God, and so as you may still continue in the true feare of God, and holinesse, then have peace with all, Hebrewes, chapter 12. vers. 14. saith the holy Ghost, *Follow peace with all men, and holinesse, without the which no man shall see the Lord.*

Where we see a manifest limitation of peace, wee must have peace with all men, but in holinesse, and in the Lord. And the reason of this is plaine, namely this; peace with men is not simply good, and ever good without exception, but then onely, when it goes hand in hand with truth and holinesse, then indeed it is Gods peace.

First therefore, is it so that the peace we are to hold with men, must bee joyned with truth of religion and holinesse: wee have then good and sufficient warrant for our refusall of a pacification with the Papists in respect of religion: we have good reason for it not to make peace with them, nor to consent with them in regard of religion; because peace with them in that respect would not be Gods peace; the peace that is of God, must be peace in truth and holinesse, and we must remember that Christ is the way, the life, and the truth; and therefore to have contention with such as hold not the truth in him, is no breach of peace, Isa. chap. 59. vers. 4. wee read that the Lord calls for contention, yea hee was angry that none would make dissention, in taking part with the truth. *No man (saith he) contendeth for the truth.* It is the opinion of some, that there might bee a pacification betweene us and the Papists in respect of religion, if there were on both sides but a little yeelding: it is true (indeed) by yeelding there is some likelihood, and a generall possibility, but no lawfull possibility of peace betweene us; because (as they grant) there must bee a yeelding on both sides; but that wee may not admit on our part, because the religion wee hold and professe, is the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles, grounded on the truth of the word of God, from which wee may not swerve one haire breadth.

Again, is it so, that the peace we hold with men must go hand in hand with holinesse? then take wee knowledge of it, that our peace and agreement with men must not be (as commonly it is in the world) a peace and agreement with them in prophaneesse and sinne, a drunken peace, commonly called good-fellowship. No, no, that is not a peace of God, but the devils peace, and we are to be enemies, and at utter defiance with such peace. Wee have *Dauids* example for it, Psalm. 94. 16. saith David there, *Who will rise up with mee against the wicked, or who will take my part against the workers of iniquity?* Where (wee see) hee utters a voice of dissention, at ever there were any, yea that which one calles the foame of dissention. *David* is so farre from joyning hands with the wicked in their sinne, as that hee proclaimes a parraking against them, and his example must we follow. It must be far from us to joyne hands with the wicked and prophane men in their sin: yea, in respect of their wickednesse and prophaneesse (I dare be bold to affirme) wee are to be contentious with a holy contention, not with bitterness and bawling, as *Jeremie* cries out, *Jerem. chap. 15. vers. 10. Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne mee a contentious man, and a man that striveth with the whole earth;* which was in respect of the wickednesse of that time. Let then the world charge ush, as in zeale to Gods glory, and in a Christian

Reason.

Vse 1.

We have sufficient warrant for our refusall of a pacification with the Papists in respect of religion.

Vse 2.

Our peace with men, and our agreement with them must not be in prophaneesse and sin.

shall care to discharge the office of true friends doe reprove others, haply their neighbours for their grosse finnes, and tell them of their swearing, cursing, and such like: let (I say) the world taxe them to be troublesome men, and busie-bodies, and such as no man can live in peace by; yet let them still goe on in that duty, and know it is not only lawfull, but their duty, to contend with prophane persons, and in respect of their wickednesse, to be contentious with them. The peace we are to hold with men, must be Gods peace, even such as is joyned with holinesse and good conscience.

Observe we in the next place, the Apostle saith not, let the peace of God be in you, but, let it rule in you.

The duty hence offered is soone gathered, namely this; The peace of God, a holy and religious peace, must not onely have place, but a principall place in us; it must be a predominant and ruling peace.

Now the word (*Rule*) as we know) is a word of relation, it hath respect to things ruled: and the things an holy peace must rule and order, are our evill lusts and affections, that stirre us up to discord and dissention, as pride, envie, covetousnesse, and the like; and so the duty is thus to be conceived: We must carry in us such a peace as is able to keepe downe all our evill lusts and affections, that stirre us up to discord and dissention, wee must have in us a peace so strong and so powerfull, as neither pride, envie, covetousnesse, nor any other evill lust or affection, shall bee able to prevaile or to breake out with any contention.

And the reason and ground of this is given, *Iam. 4. 1.* the Apostle there shewes by the contrary, that where peace doth not rule, there our evill lusts and affections breake out into jarres and dissentions: *wherein (saith he) are warres and contentions among you? are they not hence a ven of your lusts, that fight in your members, from your lusts, prevailing in your hearts, and using your members as weapons of discord and dissention? thereby implying, that where peace is wanting, or doth not rule in mens hearts, there followes jarres, discords and dissentions.*

Teaching us this duty, That peace ought so to rule and command our evill lusts and affections, as they shall not bee able to fight in our members, nor to breake out into jarres and contentions.

Now if this duty be duly considered, wee shall find that many are much defective in it. Doe not the common brawles, and needlesse contentions that are amongst men plainly shew it, that peace is not predominant in them? when men are at difference and contention one with another, are they not hardly drawne to peace, or any agreement? as the common saying is, a Beare might as easily be drawne to the stake, as many men to union and good agreement; when they are urged unto it: doth not then their pride, their envie, or some other evill lust or affection worke within them, and so farre prevaile, as they will not bee perswaded to it? and what is this but a plaine demonstration, that holy and religious peace beares no rule in them, but they are over-ruled by their owne evill lusts and affections, and they fight in their members.

Well, let us take notice of that which is amisse in us, and learne to reframe it, and never rest, till wee finde such a peace wrought in us, as is able to keepe under all our evill lusts and affections, and to that end carry in thee a love and desire of peace; for they that have no desire to it, can never have it to rule in them.

And againe, search thine owne heart, and finde out that lust that is the chiefe cause of contention in thee, labour to dispossesse thine heart of that, and to stirre thee up to this, remember only this one thing.

If peace and good agreement with men rule not in thee, certainly thou hast no true peace with God, and if thou have a felled peace of heart towards God,

Doct. 2.

We must carry in us such a peace, as is able to over-rule all our evill lusts and affections, stirring us up to discord.

Reason.

Vse. 1.

Reprooffe of such as are defective in this duty.

Vse. 2.

We must labour to finde such a peace in us, as is able to keepe under, all our evill lusts and affections. How we may attaine unto it.

of necessity thou must be at unity and peace with men, this will ever follow on the former.

If then thou desire assurance of thy peace with God, labour thou to get such a peace with men, as hath the command over all thy evill lusts and affections.

The Apostle saith, Let the peace of God rule in your hearts:

Hence note wee further, that the proper seat of holy peace is the heart, it is a final thing to have peace in our mouthes and tongues, when we have war in our hearts, for so may hypocrites, as the Prophet complained, Ierem. 9. 8. yea, a man may be kept from discord and contention outwardly, by restraining grace, but if peace rule in the heart, that is a worke of Gods Spirit.

Come we to the argument the Apostle doth here subjoyne to his exhortation, for the enforcing of it on the Colossians, together with the amplification of it in these words (*so be which ye are called in one body*) the argument as wee may easily see, is from the condition of the Colossians, that they were called to peace as the members of one body, and therefore ought to entertaine it, and to have it ruling in their hearts.

The amplification is (as we shewed) by requiring of them another duty serving for the better entertainment and continuance of peace, namely, that to that end they should be *Amiable* or gratefull (*so be which*) that is to say, to which peace of God before spoken of (*ye are called*) that is to say, ye are bound by your calling, as you are Christians, and called to the profession of the Gospell, for when a man is said to be called to any duty, thereby is not only signified that it is lawfull for him to doe that duty, but that by his calling hee is bound to the performance and practice of it (*in one body*) that is, as the members of one body being gathered and knit together, by the spirit of God, as members of one body under one head Christ Iesus (*and be ye amiable*) that is, according to the true and proper signification of the word, be ye gratefull or thankfull, which is not to be understood, (as some would have it) with relation to God, as if the meaning were, be ye thankfull to God, for of that the Apostle speakes afterward verse 17. and here he entreats of duties that passe from man to man, and are to be performed of man to man: it is therefore to be understood with relation to men, be ye gratefull or thankfull one to another, as well in conferring, as in requiting of benefits: thus then conceive wee these words, as if the Apostle had said: Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, for why? it is a duty you are bound to, as you are called to be true professors of the Gospell, gathered and knit together by the spirit of God, as members of one body, under one head Christ Iesus: and that you may better entertaine and continue this peace among you, be ye gratefull one to another, as well in conferring, as in requiting of benefits.

First, wee are heere to marke that the Apostle doth urge peace on the Colossians, and perswade them to it, by an argument taken from their Christian calling, that they were called to it, in that they were Christians, and professors of the Gospell, and therefore ought to have it ruling in their hearts: whence wee may easily see.

That the remembrance and consideration of our Christian calling and profession, ought to sway and prevaile with us, to move us to holy duties. This generally might be stood on, but we have often had occasion to speake of it, and therefore we will keepe to the particular here urged by the Apostle: hence then wee are taught thus much.

That Christians and professors of the Gospell, are bound to peace and good agreement one with another, by their calling and profession: our calling and profession of the Gospell, and Christianity, doth or should bind us to the peace of God. A holy and religious peace, is a duty to which we are called, a duty that belongs to us, in respect of our Christian calling and profession. For why? True

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The proper
seat of true
peace is the
heart.

Interpretation.

Doct. 3.
Christians and
professors of,
the Gospell,
are bound to
peace and

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ment one with
another, by
their calling
and profession

Reason.

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Vse.

Such as are at
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stian calling.

believing Christians and professors of the gospel, are called to bee children of God, and he is the God of peace, the author of holy peace, not of discord: they are called the professors of the Gospel, and that is a word of glad tidings and peace, yea, it makes lambs of Lyons. The Prophet, speaking of the fruits of the Gospel, in the kingdom of Christ, saith, Isa. 11. 6. *The wolfe shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall ly with the kid, and the calfe & the lyon, and the fat beast together, and a little child shall bind them,* meaning that (in the kingdom of Christ) the Gospel should make the most mighty, fierce and cruell (even as Lyons and wolves, and such like) to put off their wolvis and Lyonlike nature, to become milde, gentle and peaceable: yea, true christians are called to have interest and title in the covenant of grace, which is also a covenant of peace: they are called to have peace with God, and peace with their owne conscience, and therefore (without question) holy & religious peace with men is a duty to which they are bound and belonging to them in respect of their Christian calling: and this being cleere, let us think on it, to this purpose. Is it so, that an holy and religious peace with men is a duty that belongs to us in respect of Christian calling? certainly then it must needs follow that such as are at jarre, discord, and dissention with others, offend against Christian calling, and not onely neglect the duty of that calling, but goe directly against it, and contrary to it, and so doing, their case and condition is most fearefull. Such as doe any thing, either without the compasse of their particular and personall calling, or against it, sinne grievously, and bring themselves in danger of all Gods judgements; for men have assurance of Gods protection, only so long as they keep themselves within the waies of their callings, Psal. 91. 11. if they goe out of them, they bereave themselves of Gods protection, & lay themselves open to al his plagues and judgments, yea, the text is plain, Mat. 24. that the Lord (at the day of judgement) wil deale severely with such as shall be found at his comming, either neglecting the duties of their callings, or doing contrary, verse 51. It is said, he will then cut off the evill servant, and give him his portion with hypocrites, there shall be weeping & gnashing of teeth. If this be the cause of such, as either neglect the duties of their personall callings, or doe the contrary, how fearefull then is the case of such as not onely neglect, but doe the contrary to the duty of their generall calling of Christianity, & profession of the Gospel, which is more excellent than all particular callings? Surely, wee must of force confesse their case to bee most fearefull. Art thou called to peace with men? is peace a duty that belongs to thee, in respect of thy Christian calling? dost thou not onely neglect that duty, but practise the contrary? art thou found at jarre, at discord and dissention with others? surely, then thou liest naked and open to all the fearefull strokes of Gods punishing hand in this life: and if the Lord should take thee away (as thou hast no assurance of thy life, one minute of an houre) if the Lord should take thee away in thy brawling and contention, then woe to thee, it had beene better for thee thou hadst never been borne. (without the extraordinary and unspeakable mercy of God) thy body then falls to the ground, but thy soule goes downe into hell.

Oh that such as bee at dissention and discord with others, had hearts to consider this, would they then goe on in their brawles and contentions? would they then carry themselves like Lyons or beares, and haply please themselves, in their beastlike nature and behaviour? I am perswaded (if hell have not taken full possession of them) they would not: this day before to morrow they would seeke to be reconciled, and to have peace with all men, therefore consider it seriously, that peace with men is a duty of thy calling, as thou art a Christian: And if thou bee found in that which is contrary to it, in discord, and dissention, thy case is most fearefull: and let us all consider, how unworthy and unbecoming our high and excellent calling it is, to give our selves to contention and debate: let them that are not called to peace, contend and make debate, as for us, the con-

dition

dition of our calling will not beare it, either we must renounce contention, or else disclame the calling of Christians.

Marke wee further, the Apostle saith, not onely let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you are called, but hee addes further in one bodie, more clearly expressing it, how they were called to peace (namely) as the members of one body: the point hence offered is this.

That Christians are to have and to hold peace, concord and good agreement one with another, as members of one and the same bodie: for indeed they are one body in Christ, and every one, one anothers members, Rom. 12. 5.

We find this duty propounded in these termes, in many places of Scripture, Ephes. 4. 3. the Apostle having exhorted to keepe the unitie of the Spirit in the bond of peace he addes this as one speciall reason and ground of it, verse 4. there is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your vocation, no doubt this duty is well knowne to most men in speculation, the Scripture is so plaine and plentifull in the manifestation and prooffe of it: and therefore for the use of it.

Let it serve as a ground of further exhortation to peace and good agreement one with another: many reasons might be brought to moove us heereunto, as our conjunction in one nature, country, place, habitation, law, liberty, and religion, all which are of great waight, to moove us to have peace and good agreement, but above all, this is of greatest waight, and most effectuall, that we are members of one body: for the very light and order of nature, teacheth the members of the same body, to be at peace one with another: what member of the body fallerh out or disagreeeth with another? we cannot give instance or example of any well in his wits, that did ever hate or hurt his owne body, or that any one member of a mans body, was at discord with another if then the consideration of this, that wee are members of one and the same body, moove us not to live in peace and good agreement, it will convince us of sinne against the light of nature, yea more, even of sinne against the light of grace, in that the holy Ghost hath revealed it to us, that wee are knit together by one spirit, one faith, and one hope of salvation; let then the consideration of our neere union into one body, under one head, *Christ Jesus*, moove us to peace and good agreement, if it doe not, surely it agrees wee are none of the members of that body. Now heere a question comes to be answered, in that the Apostle saith, wee are called to peace in one body, as members of one body under one head, *Christ Jesus*, it may bee demanded whether we may have peace with such as are enemies to the Church and so (as farre as wee can conceive) as yet not members with us of the same body, nor under the same head *Christ Jesus*, but are under *Antichrist*: this question was in part answered before, but for more full answer to it, know wee that there is a twofold peace, a peace in respect of civill affaires, or a peace in respect of religion, the first of these wee may have with the enemies of the Church, yea, in respect of civill businesse, we may make a league or covenant of peace with them, as *Abraham* did with *Abimelech*, Gen. 21. 32. *Isaac* with *Abimelech*, Gen. 26. 31. but in respect of religion, wee may not make peace with the enemies of the Church, for that were to joyne light and darkenesse, truth and falshood, which can never stand together.

Come we to the last thing here required of the *Colossians* (*and be ye amiable*) I will not handle this as a duty standing by it selfe, but as here it stands in relation to peace, being here required by the Apostle, as a meanes of better entertainment and continuance of peace, and so the point hence offered, is this,

That the effectuall meanes, either to procure and purchase peace and concord, where it is not, or to continue it where it is, is gratifying, and pleasing one another by mutuall ben. fits, by conferring and requiting of benefits.

This will best appeare by particulars, it is a notable meanes either to procure

Doff. 4.

Christians are to have and to hold peace and good agreement one with another, as members of one and the same body.

Reason.

Use.

The consideration of this, that wee are members of one body, ought to be most effectuall to move us to good agreement one with another.

Quest.

Answ.

Doff. 5.

An effectuall meanes either to procure peace, where

it is not, or to continue it where it is, is gratifying one another by mutuall benefits.

Vse
Our money and other outward good things are not only to be put to necessary uses, but also to be used for procurement and continuance of peace and good agreement with one another.

or to continue peace by sending gifts and presents one to another, they commonly prevaile wheresoever, or which way soever they goe: A singular example we have in the gifts and presents that *Jacob* sent to *Esau*, he saith, hee sent them, that hee might find favour in his sight for the procuring of peace, and agreement betweene them, as gifts of pacification: and the Lord gave a blessing to that end; so likewise lending one another money, household stuffe, and things needfull, accompanying each other in our journeyes, as the *Elders of Ephesus* did *Paul* to the ship, *Act. 20. 38.* inviting one another to our tables and such like, are notable meanes, both to procure and to continue peace and good agreement. Wee read *Iude. Epist. vers. 12.* that Christians in the Apostles daies, had their love feasts, which were for the testifying and continuance of their love and unity.

The use of this is this, it teacheth us not onely the lawfulness of these things, that wee may lawfully send presents one to another, but it teacheth an excellent use that is to be made of our money, and other such things: that they are given us, not onely for our necessity, and to provide us food, or to shew our liberality, but also to win and keepe the good affection of our brethren, and for procuring continuance of peace and concord with them: and let us looke that among other uses, wee make this one principall use of our riches, and outward good things, and abilities; worldly goods commonly part friends, as they did *Jacob* and *Laban*, *Gen. 31.* thorow our corruption they are meanes of strife and disagreement, and the very matter of the greatest contention; but they that so use them (as one saith well) the time will come when they shall wish, they had never gone further than the shovell, or spade; Wee must so use them, as they may be meanes of peace and concord, and then, no doubt, wee shall finde the blessing of God upon them, and comfort in the use of them, when wee stand in most need of comfort.

Vers. 16. *Let the word of Christ dwell in you plentifully in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing your own selves, in Psalms, Hymnes, and spiritual songs, singing with a grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

THe Apostle from *verse 5.* of this Chapter to this *16. verse* hath exhorted the *Colossians* both to the mortifying, and putting away of such vices and finnes as are forbidden in the second Table of the Commandements, and to the putting on, and taking to themselves such vertues as are there required: and having ended that his exhortation, In this *16. verse*, and in the *17. vers* following, he exhorts them to the duties of the first Table, as to diligent study of the word of God, to invocation, and calling on God in the name of Christ, and to thanksgiving.

This verse for the dependance of it, hath reference and respect to matter foregoing, on this manner: The Apostle having exhorted the *Colossians* plentifully to sanctification, as well in putting off the old man with his works, as putting on the new man with his parts.

To the end they might doe these things: in this verse, hee exhorts them to familiar acquaintance with the word of God.

That, to that end they should have the word of God as domesticks; as a dweller with them and familiar unto them.

In this verse considered by it selfe, wee have these things laid before us.

First, the Apostle doth exhort the *Colossians*, that the word of Christ should be a dweller among them.

And that hee doth further amplify both by the measure of the word, that ought to dwell with them, indefinitely propounded, that it ought to be a plentiful measure.

And also by the manner of the dwelling of it, that it dwell with them in all wisdom

wisdom, *Let the word of Christ dwell in you plentifully in all wisdom.*

After this, the Apostle doth presse upon the Colossians the use of the word of Christ dwelling among them, that they ought to make a double use of it, even thereby to teach, and to admonish, both themselves and others: *teaching and admonishing your one selves.*

And he expresseth some particulars wherein they should teach and admonish themselves, and others (namely) *in Psalms, and Hymnes, and Spirituall songs.*

Wherein is also implied, how farre forth the word of Christ should bee familiar to them (namely) so farre forth as it should serve for the matter of their mirth; that when they had occasion to rejoyce, they should bee able to sing out of the word of God, *Psalms, and Hymnes, and spirituall songs*: and having made mention of *Psalms, and hymnes, and spirituall songs*, the matter of their mirth.

Hee setteth downe further the manner how they should use them, as that for the generall, they should sing them, and in special, with grace in their hearts, and to the Lord, *Singing with a grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

So then the summe of this verse is: An exhortation to the Colossians, to have plentiful measure of the word of Christ, familiar to them, and so as they should bee able wisely to use it for the instruction and admonition of themselves and others; yea to make use of it in their mirth, shewing forth mirth in singing after an holy manner, in Psalms, and Hymnes, and Spirituall songs; singing with a grace in their hearts to the Lord.

Come wee to the words of this verse, and first of these words (*Let the word of Christ dwell in you plentifully in all wisdom*) the word of Christ doth in speciall signifie the Gospell, the doctrine of grace and reconciliation with God, in, and thorow Christ.

But here it is to be taken in a large sense and signification, even for the whole written word of God, that being given by inspiration of God, 2 Tim. 3. 16. and profitable to the uses heere limited, and specified, to teach and to admonish: Now the whole Scripture is called the word of Christ, both because hee is the author of it, for hee it was that spake by Moses, and the Prophets, it was the Lord Christ that sent Isaiah the Prophet, as may plainly appeare by conference of Isaiah, 6. 9. 10. and Ioh. 12. 40. 41. and so he sent other Prophets successively time after time: and because hee is the matter and end of the whole Scripture, Iohn 5. 46. Moses wrote of him, as Gen. 3. 15, and in the ceremony of the Paschall Lamb, in the type of the Tabernacle, the Ark, all Sacrifices, the brazen Serpent, yea the whole Scripture propoundes Christ to us the onely mediator and Saviour, and to him is the whole Scripture referred as the end of it, Rom. 10. 4. *Hee is the end of the Law, &c.* And againe, Gal. 3. 24. *The Law was our Schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, and doth leade us to Christ*; and for these reasons is it that the whole Scripture is called the word of Christ, (*dwell*) the word here translated (*dwell*) properly signifies to inhabite, or dwell as a domestick, as one of the same house; it is a Metaphor taken from such as dwell under one and the same rooffe with us, who are best knowne to us and most familiar with us; and the Apostles meaning is that the word of God should bee as well knowne and familiar to us, as he or shee that dwelles with us in one and the same house, (*in you*) that is, amongst you; let it dwell amongst you, and bee familiar to you, (*plentifully*) that is, in abundance and great measure, (*in all wisdom*) that is, in true and sound wisdom; it is usuall in Scripture to put the note of universallitie (*all*) to signifie excellency, perfection, truth, and soundnesse: And the wisdom heere spoken of, is not the wisdom of the word it selfe, but the wisdom that ought to bee in them, to whom the word is familiar; and the Apostles meaning is, that they should bee wise in the understanding and use of the word, being familiar to them, that they should wisely understand it, and wisely use it.

The argument of the verse.

Interpretation.

Meaning of
the text.

Observe.
Vers. 5.

Vers. 12. 13.
14-15.

The onely ef-
fectuall means
serving for the
mortification
of sinne, and
for the putting
on and practice
of vertue, is
the word of
God.

Thus then wee are to conceive these words, as if the Apostle had said: Let a plentifull measure of the written word of God be as familiar, and well known to you, as a dweller with you in one and the same house, so as in true wisdom you both understand it, and use it.

Wee are here to marke first of all, that the Apostle having exhorted the Colossians, to the mortification, and to the putting away of sundrie vices, as fornication, uncleanness, the inordinate affection, evill concupiscence, and covetousnesse which is idolatry, and to the putting on and practise of many vertues, as tender mercy, kindnesse, humblenesse of minde, meeknesse, long suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, and above all, love, which is the bond of perfection, and peace.

Hee now comes to exhort them to have the word of God familiar to them, as a meane to make them able to practise that, to which hee hath hitherto exhorted.

And hence wee may take this conclusion: That the onely effectuall meane serving for the mortification and putting away of sinne, and for the putting on and practise of vertue, is the word of God, no other thing is able to make us truly to abstaine from sinne, and to practise vertue, but onely the word of God.

Morall precepts of *Philosophers* and wise men, a good name, good company, good education, good examples and such like, though they be excellent things, and of excellent use, yet they are not able to doe this, to make us truly to mortifie sinne, and put on, and practise vertue, only the word of God is able to doe that. And hence it is, that our Saviour praying for his Apostles, and all other that should beleve in him, through their teaching: hee saith, Ioh. 17. 7. Sanctifie them with the truth, thy word is truth. And Ioh. 15. 3. Ye are cleane (saith he) through the word which I have spoken unto you. Psalm. 119. 9. David having propounded the question; wherewith shall a yong man redresse his way as if hee had said, wherewith shall a man most unbridled, untamed, and unreformed, come to bee bridled, tamed, and reformed; hee presently answers himselfe, even by no other thing, but by the word of God, which is a plaine proofe of this point, that the word of God is the onely powerfull meane that serves for the purging out, and putting away of sinne, and for the putting on and practise of vertue.

The reasons of this are plaine;

First, onely the word of God pierceth into the hearts of men, from whence all actions good and bad proceede, Heb. 4. 12.

Secondly, nothing is able to make that which is spoken to us effectually, but the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of God worketh by the word, and therefore it is the word of God, that is onely an effectuall meane of the mortification of sinne, and of the putting on and practise of holinesse.

Hence it appeares plainly, wee may easily see it that the Papists are no such friends to good workes as they would make the world beleve, they pretend that they are most zealous of good workes, and such friends to holinesse of life, as none are like to them, and they cry out against us as enemies of good workes; but indeed, if wee duely consider the matter, we shall finde none greater enemies to good workes and true holinesse, than they, in as much as they take order that there may be no familiarity or acquaintance betwixt the people, and the word of God; for they straitly forbid the people, to read the word of God, or to have it in their mother tongue: it is the word of God that is the onely effectuall meane to worke true mortification and holinesse, and will they barre the people from that, and yet pretend that they are the onely friends and favourers of good workes? Is any so simple that sees not their deceite? And who cannot easily discern, that their practice is in flat opposition, and contrariety to their words? I leave them, and for use of the point to our selves.

Use 1.
The Papist.
are no such
friends to good
workes as they
would make
men beleve.

Is it so, that the word of God is the onely effectuell meanes to worke true mortification and holinesse of life? Then if thou desire to have sinne truly mortified in thee, and to bee renewed, and to be made truly holy (without which, thou shalt never see God to thy comfort) never rest till thou bee sure that the word of God hath wrought in thee a mortification of thy sinne, and a measure of holinesse: thou maist come to have a shew of mortification, and holinesse, by other meanes, but true mortification and holinesse is onely wrought in thee by the Word of God: and therefore never rest till thou finde that the Word of God hath been powerfull in thee to that purpose.

Haply thou wilt say, how shall I know that the word of God hath been thus powerfull in me to the mortification of my sinne, and to worke holinesse in me? I abstaine from sinnes, yea, I can name particular sinnes to which heretofore I have yeelded, but now I abstaine from them, am not I then mortified?

Ans. Thou shalt know it, especially by two things.

First, if thou comest to the fight of thy sinnes by the law of God, Rom. 3.20. *By the law cometh the knowledge of sinne.*

Secondly, by thy affection both to the law, and to thy sinne, if thou love the law of God, even because it discovereth thy sinne, and the more it discovereth thy sinne, the more thou lovest it, as David did, Psalme 119. 143. And if thou hate thy sinne principally, because God hates and forbids it, and not in any sinister respect.

These are sure notes that the word of God hath bene effectuell to worke in thee a mortification of thy sinne, and never rest till thou finde these things in thy selfe.

The next thing we have to mark, is, that the Apostle calls the written word of God, the word of Christ, *Let the word of Christ dwell in you plentifully, &c.*

Hence it is plaine that Christ speaks to us in the written word, yea, Christ speaks to us in any doctrine, either plainly expressed in the written word of God, or thence gathered by necessary and good consequence, that doctrine so expressed, or so gathered, is the word of Christ: our Saviour saith, Luk. 10. 16. to the severitie Disciples, *He that heareth you, heareth me: and hee that despiseth you, despiseth me.* The meaning is not, Whosoever heareth man called to teach, heares me simply, whatsoever hee teacheth, but so long as man teacheth Gods word.

And that appeares plainly, Ioh. 14. 26. where Christ promiseth, that his Spirit should suggest, and bring all things to the mindes of his Disciples, and (their followers: and he addes, which hee had told and taught them, and not any new doctrine and revelations. So long then as the doctrine is either plainly expressed in the written word of God, or thence gathered by good and necessarie consequence, it is the word of Christ, and so to be heard and received of us as the word of Iesus Christ.

This I note to shew the vanitie of some phantastike spirits, who bragge much of illumination of the Spirit, and depend on their revelations, beside the written word of God, thou must know, whosoever thou art, that thy revelation (besides the written word of God) is not the teaching of Christ, nor suggested by his Spirit, but by the spirit of error, even of the devill, and the word and doctrine of Christ, is the doctrine, either expressed, or agreeable to the written word of God.

It is worth our marking, that the Apostle calls his preaching, the ministration of the Spirit, 2 Cor. 3. 8. to teach us, that the Word and Spirit ever goe together, the Spirit shineth in the Word, and the Word is powerfull by the Spirit, and wee must bee taught of God, but it must be by the Word: and therefore deceive not thy selfe by any new vision or revelation, besides the written word of God.

Vse 1.

If a man would be sure that he is truly mortified, and made truly holy, hee must look that the word of God hath wrought it in him.

Quest.

Answer.

Doff. 2.

Christ speaks to us in the written word of God, and in every doctrine thence gathered by necessary consequence.

Vse.

The vanitie of such as rest upon revelations, besides the written word of God, discovered.

Doct. 1.
We must bee
as well ac-
quainted with
the word of
God, as with
an home-
dweller.

Vse 1.
The Papists
deale injuri-
ously with
their people,
in forbidding
them to looke
into the word
of God.

Object.

Answer.

Vse 2.
Reproofe of
them to whom
the word of
God is a stran-
ger.

Object.

Answer.

Marke wee further, the Apostle exhorts that the word of God should bee as one dwelling with us under the same rooffe, as familiar to us as a home-dweller. Hence ariseth this dutie: That the word of God must not only be knowne to us abroad, as one that wee meete sometimes in publike, but as one of our owne house; we must be as well acquainted with the word of God, as with one that doth dwell and converse with us every day, and lodge with us every night, that as we know one with whom we are familiarly acquainted, not only by face, and can call him by his name, but we know him inwardly, and wee are acquainted with his nature and disposition, and with the very purpose of his heart, so wee must be acquainted with the word of God. Not onely knowing the face and sentence of the Scripture, but the inward purpose and meaning of the holy Ghost in it, especially in the plaine places of it, and such as containe things needfull to be knowne to salvation. Prov. 7. 3. *Salomon* exhorts us to binde the instructions of wisdom and her commandments, upon our fingers, and write them upon the table of our hearts, to have them even at our fingers ends: and verse 4. *Say unto wisdom, thou art my sister, and call understanding thy kinswoman*: bee as familiar with the wisdom of God revealed in his word, as with thine owne sister. 2 Tim. 3. 15, *Paul* saith, *Timothy* knew the holy Scriptures of a childe; and therefore doubtlesse they were very familiar to him.

And must the word of God bee thus familiar to us, even as one of our owne house? How injuriously then deale the Papists in not suffering their people to have an insight into it? they say, the people are not without speciall homes to looke into the word of God, but they must receive all things from their teachers on their bare words, not reasoning or asking any question more than the horse asketh his rider why hee turnes him this way or that way, but simply obeying.

Now what is this, but directly to crosse and contradict the spirit of God? but they object the reading of the Scripture by the common people, is many times hurtfull, they pervert it, and thence come errors and dangerous opinions? a poore silly shift.

Some through their owne corruption abuse the reading of the Scripture, shall we therefore take away the right use of it? The word preached, by mans corruption, to some is an occasion of deeper damnation; shall we therefore condemn or take away the preaching of the word? That is a deceitfull kind of reasoning.

Let us further applie the dutie to our selves: Is it so, that the word of God must bee as familiar to us, as one of our owne house? then thousands in the world, come within compasse of just reproofe: are there not thousands to whom the word of God is as a stranger? they know no more the voyce and face of it, than of any they never saw before, they are ignorant not onely of the sentences of Scripture, but even of the examples of it, which of all things are most easie, yea, of the principall and fundamentall points taught in each booke, a fault that cannot sufficiently be taxed, especially in these dayes: and let ignorant persons take knowledge of it, and learne to reforme it, and never rest till thou bee familiarly acquainted with the word of God, and to that end be diligent in hearing, reading and meditating in the word of God, and joynethereunto conference and prayer: content not thy selfe to meete with the word in publike, but bee acquainted with it at home, turne over the leaves of the booke of God in thine owne house, yea, take away some time from the workes of thy calling, so bestow in reading of the Scripture.

Thou wilt say, I cannot reade.

Then get others that can, to reade to thee, and with greater diligence attend to it.

And to stirre thee up to this dutie, consider onely these two things.

First,

and familiarly, wee may doubtlesse come to the understanding of it: yea, the simplest man or woman may come to bee instructed out of the word of God in all points of faith and manners needfull to be knowne to his or her owne salvation. Psalme 119. 7. *The testimonie of the Lord is sure, and giveth wisdom unto the simple*: and Psalme 119. 130. *The entrance into thy words sheweth light, and giveth understanding to the simple*. For howsoever it cannot bee denied, but there are many things in Scripture hard to be understood, yet whatsoever is necessary to be knowne, is plainly set forth in the Scripture, and easie to be understood of such as with care and conscience use the meanes.

The Papists lay an hardnes and obscurity on the Scripture, and hold that the Scripture, in what language soever, is obscure and hard to be understood, not onely of the unlearned, but of the learned also, and that they know not when they have the right understanding of it, which indeed is a most injurious, and an unthankfull conceit towards God himselfe. Hath the Lord given us his written word, wrapped up in such clouds of obscuritie, and such doubtfull speech, as it is not possible to know when wee have the true sense of it? No, no, there is no such matter, and it is a most wicked thing so to imagine, it had been farre better then, that no Scripture had been written at all.

There is no doubt, but the Lord purposing to reveale his will to man by the Scripture, hath caused them to be written in such sort, as men may without any just cause of doubting understand them aright, at least so much of them as is needfull to be knowne to salvation, that being the very end on Gods part, in writing of them, as appears plainly, Ioh. 20. 31.

These things are written that yee might believe, that Iesus is the Christ the Sonne of God, and that in beleeving ye might have life.

Now the dutie which these words (*in all wisdom*) doe charge upon us, is this.

Wee must looke that our familiar acquaintance with a plentiful measure of the Word, be in true and sound wisdom, wee must be wise both in the understanding and use of the Word. If wee be able to carrie in minde, and remember many sentences or examples of Scripture, which wee have heard or read, and they are familiar unto us, wee must looke that wee wisely understand them, and wisely use them.

And if you aske me wherein stands that wise understanding, and wise use of the sentences of Scripture, and the things wee are able to remember out of the Word?

I answer, in two things.

First, in a right understanding of them.

And secondly, in a right use of them.

As a man is said to be wise and well scene in any Art, when hee is able not onely to repeate the rules of that Art, but he doth rightly understand them, and can make a right use of them: so we are wise in the understanding, and wise in the use of the sentences, examples, and rules of Scripture, when we are familiar to us, when we rightly conceive them, and rightly apply them, when we understand them according to the true meaning of the holy Ghost, and when wee make a right and good use of them, and are bettered by them, and especially in two respects.

First, when wee thereby enforme and build up our selves in things most important, and of greatest waight concerning us (as we are Christians) as in faith, the feare of God, love to God and men, and true comfort both in life and death, and to that end make choise, and spend most time in the studie of such places, and sentences of Scripture, as serve most to that purpose.

And secondly, when we thereby enforme our selves in things and duties that most concerne us and our particular callings.

The

Vse.

Confutation
of the Papists,
laying an
hardnesse and
obscuritie on
the Scripture.

Doct. 6.

Our familiar
acquaintance
with a plenti-
full measure of
Gods word,
must be in true
and sound wis-
dome.

Quest.

Ans.

The reason and ground of this dutie is, because, howsoever the word be in it selfe, the will and wisdom of God revealed, yet to us it is not so, being by us misunderstood, or used amiss: that is onely the good and profitable word of God to us, that is of us rightly understood, and rightly used, especially so used, as that thereby wee enforme ourselves in things most important, and in duties that most concerne us in particular, and therefore wee must bee wise in understanding the word aright, and in using it aright, especially to enforme us both in things that concerne our eternall good, and to make us wise to salvation, 2 Timoth. 3. 15. and to enforme us in our particular and personall duties: 2 Tim. 2. we finde that the Apostle having exhorted *Timothy* to bee constant in undergoing the labours of his ministrie, and in bearing the troubles and afflictions attending on it: verse the seventh, he saith, *Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.* As if he had said: Heare not these things without consideration, understand me aright, and the Lord give thee, that thou maist both rightly understand, and make a right use of the things I have now spoken, that concerne thee for thine owne good, in thy place and calling. 1 Tim. 1. 4. *Paul* bids *Timothy* command some that they give not heed to genealogies, which (saith he) are endlesse, and breed rather questions than godly edifying, which is by faith. Teaching us plainly, that when we looke into the booke of God, wee are to make a difference of things, and not to spend much time and studie in things of lesse importance, but rather to labour that wee may wisely understand, and make use of things that tend to our edification and comfort, and so to bee wise in the right understanding and use of the Word, being familiar to us, as wee may be bettered by it in things most waightie, and such as concerne us in particular.

Now this dutie rightly conceived, serves to checke and reprove sundrie sorts of men in the world, as namely, all such as abuse the words and sayings of holie Scripture, to make themselves and others merry, such as make jests of Scripture-phrases, such as adulterate and make merchandize of the word of God, 2 Cor. 2. 17. thereby seeking their owne advancement in the world, and their owne gaine, such as turne it to Allegories, or such as pervert and wrest it for the maintenance of error: and of that sort there be thousands in the world. In reproofe of these I will not stand, but consider we this dutie, as it may with more profit concerne our selves: and if wee duly consider it, wee shall finde there bee two sorts of men that are thereby justly to be taxed.

First, some there be that are acquainted with many places of Scripture, they can be plentifull in quotations, and in citing of them, but it is, either for their owne delight, in some curious question, tending rather to strife than to edification, or for the holding of some false conceit of their owne, as that there is an absolute perfection of holinesse in time of this life, that the Sabbath is ceremoniall, or such like.

Againe, some there be (and those are more common) that are very expert in the duties of other men, and when they heare or reade of them, they can say there is a good lesson for such a one: but as for the things that concerne themselves, either for the information of their judgements, or for the good ordering of their lives, they have little or no care to be acquainted with them.

Is this to be wise in the understanding and use of the Word? No, no, if the Word were familiar to thee in true wisdom, thou wouldest rather informe thy selfe in those things that most concerne thy selfe, and thine owne place and calling, than in the duties of others, yea thou wouldest esteeme those the best sermons wherein thou art most effectually taught such things: and therefore remember this dutie, thou must bee wise in the understanding and use of the Word, so as thou maist be bettered by it in things most important, and such as most concerne thee in particular.

Now

Note.

Vs. 1.
Reproofe of
sundry sorts of
men.

Two sorts of
men justly
taxed.

Vs. 2.
We must re-
member this,
that we are to
be wise in the
understanding
and use of the
word of God,
to the better-
ring of us.

Quest.

Three meanes
to come to a
wise under-
standing and
use of the word
of God.

1

2

Note.

3

Note.

Interpre-
tation.

Doct. 7.
To teach and
to admonish
belongs not to
Ministers a-
lone, but even
to all that pro-
fesse Christ.

Now here haply some may say: I desire to be wise in the understanding and use of the Word, even to be bettered by it in things most weightie, and concerning my selfe in particular: but how shall I come to that true wisdom?

I answer thee, the meanes to come to it, are especially these.

First, thou must bring with thee to the hearing or reading of the word, the feare of God: for to them that feare him will the Lord reveale his secret, and his covenant, to give them understanding, *Psal. 25. 14.* the feare of God is the beginning of wisdom, *Prov. 9. 10.*

Secondly, thou must bring with thee an humble minde, laying aside all conceit of thine owne wit, be it never so great: for if thou trust to thine owne wit, thou wilt then seeke to thrust a sense and meaning on the Scripture, and not suffer thy minde and judgement to be informed by it, *Psal. 119. 130.* The entrance into thy words sheweth light, and giveth understanding to the simple: that is, not to such as have no wit, nor discretion at all, but such as are lowly in their owne eyes, and abase the pride of their owne wit, to the wisdom of Gods spirit: and thou must ever make one place of Scripture agree with another, for there is a sweete consent of Scripture with Scripture: therefore read not one sentence alone, but the whole context, and compare the like places with it.

The last and chiefe meanes, is prayer to the Lord, that hee would open the eyes of thy minde, and give thee the spirit of wisdom. *David* (a man according to Gods own heart) prayed at least ten times in *Psalms 119.* for God to instruct him in the understanding of his law; much more ought we to doe so.

And if thou be careful to use these meanes, thou shalt be wise in the understanding and use of the Word, and bee bettered by it in things that concern thy good in this life, and for ever in the life to come.

And to stirre thee up to the practice of this dutie, know thus much.

There is no comfort (as we heard) in time of trouble, but in the Word. Now the word of comfort, the sentences of Scripture full of sweete comfort, which thou art able to repeare, is no comfort to thee, unless thou be wise in the understanding and use of it: for as one saith well, The word of God foolishly understood, is not the word of God to him that so understands it: and therefore bring thou to the hearing, or reading of the word of God, the true feare of God in thine heart, lay aside all proud conceit of thine owne wit; bee carefull to make one place of Scripture agree with another, and have recourse to God by prayer, that hee would open thy understanding and wit, and then doubtlesse thou shalt have the word of God familiar to thee in true and sound wisdom, and then shalt thou wisely understand it, and make true use of it.

Come we to the use of the word, dwelling with us plentifully, heere urged by the Apostle in these words (*teaching and admonishing your owne selves.*)

(*Teaching*) that is, instructing, or informing the minde in knowledge, (*admonishing*) that is, reproving for that which is amisse in life and conversation (*your owne selves*) the word may bee expounded one another mutually, and so the meaning is briefly this: Informing one another mutually in knowledge, and reproving one another for things amisse in life and conversation.

The point hence offered is this:

It is not the Ministers office alone to teach and admonish, though especially, and in peculiar sort it belong to him: but it is the dutie of all that professe Christ, they are to teach and admonish one another, as occasion is offered. *Hebr. 5. vers. 12.* The author of that Epistle saith, *For the time, ye ought to have bene teachers.* *1 Thes. 5. 14.* Admonish them that are unruly. If wee reade *Ioh. 1.* from verse 35. to 45. wee shall finde many examples of this kinde: *John* taught *Andrew*, and another of his Disciples: *Andrew* instructed *Peter*: likewise *Iesus* *Philip*; and *Philip*, *Nathaniel*. And so it is cleere, that wee ought to teach and admonish one another: yea, private persons may sometimes instruct teachers in some

some things in private. Examples we have, Act. 18. 26. poore *Aquila* and *Priscilla* instructed eloquent *Apollos*: the text saith, *Whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they tooke him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly*: we see then our duties. Now this dutie is little thought on, or practised.

Where is (almost) that man or woman that hath care to teach, or admonish their brethren, as occasion is offered: the most have no care to teach or admonish them, that be under their charge, much lesse others. Well, this is our duty, and learne we to make conscience of it.

Againe, is this a dutie of private persons, to teach and admonish one another? Certainly then, when this duty is performed to thee by a private person, thou art to profit by it: say not thou (as commonly prophane persons use to say) when thou art justly admonished of some sinne by a private person, who made him a teacher? And what have you to doe to controle me? Doe not so put a stumbling blocke in thine owne way: know that a private person admonishing, and reproofing thee for sinne, justly, and in the spirit of meekenesse, hee is called to it, and it is God, that in him reproofes thee, and it is thy dutie to suffer thy selfe to bee admonished by him, as from the mouth of God, and therefore doe not lightly regard his admonition, but labour to profit by it, as thou wilt one day answer the contempt of it, before him that shall judge both the quicke and the dead: when God calles by any meanes, doe not thou stubbornly disobey, and cast away thine owne soule.

Come wee to the particulars heere expressed, wherein wee are to teach and admonish one another (namely) by *Psalmes*, and *Hymnes*, and *spirituall songs*, together with the manner how wee are to use them, as that (for the generall) they are to bee sung, and for the speciall manner, *with grace in our hearts to the Lord*.

Touching the difference of these three, *Psalmes*, and *Hymnes*, and *spirituall songs*, not to trouble you with varietie of opinions, this is the most received distinction of them.

That by *Psalmes*, we are to understand holy songs in generall of what argument soever written, whether precatatorie, and containing matter of petition to God for good things, or deprecatorie, containing matter of petition, for turning away of evill things, or consolatorie, containing matter of comfort, or whatsoever, which were wont to be sung to God, and sounded out as well with instrument, as with voyce.

And by *Hymnes* are meant, speciall songs of praise to God, thanksgiving to God for benefits received.

And by *spirituall songs* are signified, certaine speciall hymnes containing the praises of God for his noble acts, for his great and wonderfull workes, which were wont to bee sung onely with the voyce: and such were the songs of *Moses*, Exodus 15. of *Deborah* and *Barack*, Iudg. 5. and divers such there bee in the booke of *Psalmes*, which are therefore called songs, and not *Psalmes*. The Apostle addes (*Spirituall*) thereby understanding such songs, as proceede from the Spirit, and are framed by the Spirit, as (namely) such as are either already recorded in the Word, or composed according to the Word, containing spirituall and heavenly matter. (*Singing*) what that is wee know, uttering them with a loud, tuned, and artificiall voyce. (*with a grace in your hearts*) (that is) with understanding and feeling hearts, 1. Cor. chap. 14. verse 15. saith the Apostle, *I will sing with the spirit, but I will sing with the understanding also*, with mindes, understanding what is sung, and with hearts full of heavenly joy, stirred up, and affected according to the matter that is sung (to the Lord) that is, to the praise and glory of God, therein yeelding obedience to

Z z

God,

Vse 1.

Reproofe of such as care not to teach and admonish others upon just occasion.

Vse 2.

We are to profit by the teaching and admonition of private persons.

Interpretation.

God, and with acknowledgement of all praise, honour, and glorie to be due to him.

Thus then conceive wee the Apostles meaning, as if he had said: In holy songs to God of what argument soever, in songs of praise to God for benefits received, and in songs for his great and wonderfull workes, those songs being already either penned by the spirit of God, and found in the Booke of God, or framed according to the word, containing spirituall and heavenly matter, singing and sounding them forth by the voyce, both with understanding what is sung, and with hearts full of heavenly joy, and affected according to the matter that is sung to the praise and glory of God.

Dott. 8.

The duty of edifying one another is not to be neglected in time of our mirth.

Reason.

I

Now first wee are here to marke that the Apostle, unto teaching and admonishing one another, he presently subjoyntes in *Psalmes, Hymnes, and spirituall songs*, not limiting the duties of teaching and admonishing, onely to *Psalmes, and Hymnes, and spirituall songs*, but pressing that duty upon the Colossians when they had occasion to be merry, and did expresse their mirth by any good means, that even then they should teach and admonish one another.

Our lesson hence is this: That the duty of teaching and admonishing one another: the duty of edifying our brethren, is not to be neglected in time of our mirth, when wee have occasion to rejoyce for the blessings of God, and to shew forth our joy, by singing or playing on an instrument, or otherwise, to expresse it by lawfull meanes; we are then even in our mirth, and joy, and merrie meetings to glorifie God and edifie our brethren.

For if that be a truth (as it must needs bee, being spoken by the truth it selfe) Mar. 12. 36. that of every idle word men must give account: then doubtlesse of their idle and unprofitable singing, and merry-making, not tending to the profit of men nor the honour of God.

And againe, it being the Lord that makes us glad, and puts cheerefulness into our hearts, Act. 14. 17. There is reason that hee and his children should have the chiefe, and as it were the first fruits of the same, and therefore we are to be mindfull of this duty: even in our mirth wee are to edifie and doe good to our brethren.

A dutie little thought on, and little regarded; nay, most men thinke they are never merry, unlesse they either sit in the assembly of the mockers, as the Prophet speaks, and which hee disclaimed in himselfe, Ierem. 15. 17. *I sat not in the assembly of the mockers*. Unlesse is bee, either in scoffing, and mocking, and ranting of others; or else they breake out into prophane and uncleane speeches, songs, and dances, which hurt both themselves and others: and if haply one of better temper, and more grace tell them it is good to bee merry and wise, or that such mirth as they use is not fitting; what shall he heare from them but this, or the like speech? Hee is a precise and melancholy foole, and what doth he in their company, they come together to make merry, and why should they not be merry? hee disturbs them, and hereupon most men thinke and sticke not to say it, they cannot be merry in the company of a Minister, (if hee be not a prophane person) or in the company of one fearing God.

Now if these be our thoughts, wee must learne to reforme them, and know it is our duty even in our mirth to thinke on the edification of our brethren, and that duty is not to be omitted when we are most merry.

And that wee may be stirred up to the practise of it, remember wee that one day wee shall come to be accountable for our mirth, as well as for other things: and in this respect I may say to thee (whosoever thou art, that in thy mirth dost let thine heart loose to any kinde of mirth, and thy mirth tends altogether to the dishonour of God, and offence of his children) as *Salomon* doth to the young man, Eccles. 11. 9. Goe too, rejoyce and bee merry, let thine heart cheere thee, follow the wayes of thine owne heart, in thy merry making, lay aside

Vse.

This duty much neglected amongst men.

Vse 2.

We are to practise this dutie.

A motive stirring up unto it.

aside the remembrance of God, and of all goodnesse, but know thou that for all these things, a time will come, wherein thou shalt come to be accountable and answerable for all these things, before the Judge of all the world; therefore think on it, and take heed how thou dost demean thy selfe in time of thy mirth.

The next thing observable in these words is, that the Apostle saith, not only in *Psalmes*, but he addes further in *Hymnes*, and *spirituall songs*.

Where, note we, that the Lord in great mercy hath provided, even for the wearisomnesse of our nature, if wee had beene ryed to one of these sorts of spirituall exercises, though it were that which we are most fit for, yet such is our nature, we should have growne dull and weary of it; the Lord therefore in mercie, hath given us variety, that when wee are wearie of one, wee may take another in hand, but on that I will not further stand.

Hence we are plainly taught: That wee may lawfully shew forth our joy and mirth in *Psalmes*, and *Hymnes*, and *spirituall songs*; its lawfull for us (the Lord having given us occasion) to sing *Psalmes*, and *Hymnes*, and *spirituall songs*; and the Lord having given us variety of *Psalmes*, and *Hymnes*, and *spirituall songs*, we may lawfully make choise of *Psalmes*, and spirituall songs, and sometimes sing one, and sometimes another; yea, it is our dutie to make choise of such *Psalmes* as are most fitting our present occasion, as wee may and ought to come to God; as occasion is offered, with petitions of divers sorts, with requests, intercessions, deprecations, complaints, &c. as the Apostle hath taught us. 1 Tim. 2. 1. so wee may and ought to come to him with *Psalmes* and spirituall songs of divers arguments, fitting present occasions.

Touching the lawfulness of singing *Psalmes*, I hope, wee doubt not, wee have Christ his owne example to warrant it, Mark. 14. 26. And the example of *Paul* and *Silas*, Act. 16. 25. And we have the Apostle *James* his precept, Ia. 5. 13. Is any merry, let him sing *Psalmes*. But for our choise that we are to sing *Psalmes* according to present occasion, besides the evidence of this text, read *Psalm*. 33. 3. *David* there bids us sing to the Lord a new song; and againe hee repeates the same, *Psalm*. 96. 1. and *Revel.* 5. 9. The 24. Elders sing a new song.

Haply some may say, if wee must sing new songs to God, how are *David's Psalmes* fit for us to sing?

Answer: Even *David's Psalmes* are new to us, when wee make choise of such as are according to our new and present occasions, and when we sing them with new affections; for then though the words be old, yet the song is new to us, in the motions and affections of our hearts, and therefore we are to make choise of such *Psalmes* as fit our present occasion, and to sing them with new affections. I grant indeed it is lawfull at times, which wee set apart to that purpose, to sing the *Psalmes* of *David* from the first to the last, one after another in order, but yet if the Lord offer new and present occasion, wee are then to make choise of a *Psalm* fitting the same.

This discovers to us a notorious wrong the papists doe the people, for they restraine and limit the duty of singing *Psalmes* and spirituall songs only to certaine orders of men, and hold it a great offence and faine for the common sort of people to sing a *Psalm* to the Lord: yea, they compell the people under them, to abjure the use of *Psalmes*, which is a most wicked and injurious thing.

Let us remember howsoever wee may sing the *Psalmes* of *David*, yet wee are not to sing them hand over head, never considering what are most fit to be sung, as most doe especially in private: thou must make choise of such a *Psalm* as is most proper and fit for the present occasion, and sing it with new affections, and to that end thou art to call to minde and consider the new benefits and blessings, the Lord hath vouchsafed to his Church, to the place where thou livest, or to thee in particular: and as the Lord doth renew his grace and mercies

Observe.

Doct. 9.

Wee may lawfully shew forth our joy in singing *Psalmes* and hymnes, and spirituall songs, and wee may lawfully make choise of *Psalmes* and spirituall songs so as they fit our present occasions.

Quest.

Answer.

Vs. 1.

A wrong (which the papists doe to the people) is discovered.

Vs. 2.

Wee are not to sing *Psalmes* without regard of present occasions and without new affections.

cies, either toward his Church, or thy selfe, doe thou renew thy praises to him againe, and that in singing such Psalmes as are fit for the magnifying of his name for these mercies: and though the Psalme or song bee old in regard of the words or matter of it, yet let it bee as a new song to thee in regard of the motions and affections of thine heart: yea, sometimes when thou art most merrie, and hast occasion of great joy, in respect of some outward blessing, as haply the marriage of thy sonne or daughter, or the like, then make thou choyce, not onely of a Psalme wherein thou mayest praise God for that mercie, but at such a time as that, it will bee good for thee to sing also such a Psalme, as may serve to temper and moderate thy joy.

Namely, such a Psalm as contains matter of griefe and sorrow, thereby both to put thee in minde, what was or may bee in thee; and also to season thy joy with the remembrance of the sorrow of Gods Saints, that is also fitting in respect of thy selfe. And thus thou art to bee wise in matter of choyce of the Psalmes thou singest: for doubtlesse, to sing Psalmes without wise discretion and choyce, and without new affection, when wee have new and present occasions, is a prophaneation of them; and a taking of Gods name in vaine: and what belongs to them that so doe? thou art able to remember the Lord will not hold him guiltlesse, that taketh his name in vaine: and if the Lord will not, who shall then free thee from guiltinesse and sinne? 2

Marke we further, the Apostle saith, in *Psalmes, and Hymnes, and spiritual songs, singing them with a grace in your hearts unto the Lord.*

Whete wee may plainly see that the matter of our singing (if wee sing a ditty) must bee either such songs as are already made, and found in the word of God, or such as are composed according to the Word: it is lawfull for us to sing other songs besides Psalmes, but our songs must bee spirituall, that is, such as are composed according to the word of God; and containe spirituall matter.

Hence it is, that the Apostle, before his exhortation, in effect the same with this, Ephes. chap. 5. he sets these words, verse the 18. *Be not drunken with wine, wherein is excess: but be filled with the spirit:* as if hee had said, As drunkards when they are full of wine and strong drinke, then they use to belch and bel- low out (according to the folly and rouenesse of their stinking hearts) carnall and filthy songs, and rimes: so looke that thou bee fulfilled with the Spirit; that from the motion of the Spirit, you may sing songs suitable to such a mover, con- taining matter spirituall and heavenly.

Let the matter of your songs bee spirituall, and indeed there is reason for this, because the end of our singing must bee to stirre up spirituall joy, that wee may with spirituall alacrity and cheerefulnesse goe about good duties: therefore (doubtlesse) the matter of our singing must bee either such songs as are found in the word of God, or composed according to the Word containing spirituall matter.

This therefore meetes with all obscene, ribald and filthy songs and sonnets, which are too common in the world, all amorous ballads of love and lightnesse, that containe matter of filchinesse, and savour of nothing but the flesh, they are here condemned: and if the use of them, then certainly, the buying and selling of them is utterly unlawfull: yea, they are more fit for Sodome and the Stewes, than for a Christian Common-wealth, yet they are commonly bought and sold, and people runne after them with greedinesse: and what is their plea forsooth, they must needes have something to passe away the time, and to make them merrie. Alas poore soules, their mirth in such things, is but as the mirth of poore prisoners, who haply ate frolicke over night, and the next day are brought forth to judgements, are arraigned, condemned,

Note.

Doct. 10.
The matter of
our singing (if
it be a ditty)
must be either
songs already
found in the
word of God,
or such as are
composed ac-
cording to the
Word.

Reason.

Use.
All obscene,
ribald, and fil-
thy songs con-
demned.

Note.

condemned, and shortly after come to bee executed: if thou wilt needes bee merry, let the matter of thy mirth bee spirituall, make thy selfe merry in singing Psalmes, and Hymnes, and spirituall songs, that mirth will bring sound and lifting comfort: whereas in the midst of the other mirth, the heart is many times heave, and the end of that mirth is heaviness, Prov. 14. 13. yea, the songs and laughter of fooles (and such are all they that delight in such riballde songs) it is (as the Preacher saith, Eccles. chap. 7. verl. 8.) but as the noyse of thornes under the pot: it makes a crackling and blaze for a short time, and it is suddenly gone. Oh then, let the matter of thy singing bee such as may stirre up spirituall joy in thee, and bring forth such comfort as may last for ever.

In that the Apostle saith, *in Psalmes, and Hymnes, and spirituall songs, singing with a grace in your hearts unto the Lord*, further note wee: That as the voyce and tongue is one speciall instrument and meanes to glorifie God, and ought so to be used at all times, so chiefly in singing of Psalmes.

But I passe from that, and come to consider the manner of our singing in these words (*with a grace in your hearts to the Lord*) where first we are taught:

That in singing Psalmes and Hymnes, and spirituall songs, our hearts must goe with our voyces and tongues, our singing must not be only with the voyce, or rise onely from the throat, but it must proceed from the depth of the heart, wee must sing Psalmes and holy songs with understanding, and with an holy feeling in our hearts: our hearts must bee cheerefull in singing, even possessed with heavenly joy, and affected according to the matter that wee doe sing.

And for further clearing of this, that exhortation of David, Psal. 33. 3. serves directly, where he saith, *Sing cheerefully with a loud voyce*: as if hee had said, Sing not onely with a loud tuned voyce, but with inward affection and cheerefulness of heart: and that also of the Apostle, Ephes. 5. 19. *Speaking to your selves in Psalmes, and hymnes, and spirituall songs, singing, and making melodie to the Lord in your hearts*. The word translated (*making melodie*) signifieth making musick as with a sweet instrument, thereby plainly teaching us that when we sing Psalmes, there must be as well musick in our hearts as in our mouthes, yea the chiefest melodie must be in our hearts, our hearts must have a gracious and sweet feeling of that we sing, and it must affect our soules with spirituall pleasure and delight.

For why? most of the Psalmes are meditations, and therefore our hearts ought to be exercised in them accordingly: when wee sing them our hearts must bee full of heavenly meditations, meditating and thinking on the matter of them.

But a more generall reason and ground of this dotie is this. It is in singing of Psalmes, as it is in praying: for many times Psalmes and prayer have the same matter, and differ onely in manner of uttering. Now in vocall prayer there must bee a lifting up of the heart, together with the voyce: whence it was that Hierekiah bid Isaiab lift up his prayer to God, 2. King. 19. 4. And if the heart bee not lifted up, together with the voyce, and moved according to the matter of the prayer, surely the prayer is but lip-labour, whereof the Lord complaines, Isai. 29. 13. So it ought to be in singing of Psalmes, the heart must bee stirred up and affected according to the matter that is sung, else is the singing but lip-labour and displeasing to God. And this condemnes that manner of singing, commonly used among the Papists (namely) their singing in a strange and unknowne tongue: for how can the heart bee affected with, and according to the matter that is not understood? it is not possible, yea, this condemnes that manner of singing Psalmes, wherein the words and sentences are broken and divided, and one syllable or word is runne upon, with so

Note.

Doff. 11.

In singing of Psalmes and spirituall songs our hearts must goe with our voyces.

Reason 1.

Reason 2.
more generall.

Vfo. 1.

Singing in an unknowne tongue, and that manner of singing of Psalmes, wher-

in the words
and sentences
are broken and
divided, is not
justifiable.

Vse 2.

Our failing in
the manner of
singing of
Psalmes, dis-
covered.

Vse 3.

Our hearts
must be full of
heavenly joy,
and affected
according to
the matter of
our singing,
when we sing
Psalmes.

Quest.

Answer.

Motives to stir
us up to this
duty.

many divisions, as the sense is darkened, and the singing onely feedes the eare with a pleasing tune, but it fills not the heart with any good affection: that manner of singing, though it be of Psalmes and spiritall songs, serving onely for the tickling and delight of the eare, cannot bee justifiable by the word of God.

Againe, is it so, that in singing of Psalmes, our hearts must goe with our voyces, and our hearts must have in them a gracious feeling of that wee sing, and (according to the matter) be stirred up and affected, when we sing Psalmes, and must there be a melodie in our hearts, as well as in our mouths?

Oh then take we notice of it, that (for the most part) our singing of Psalmes, is not as it ought to bee. Doe not wee (many times) when wee are singing of Psalmes, either in private or public, thinke of nothing lesse, than of the matter we sing? Are not our hearts, even then wandering after our eyes? yea, are they not many times ranging and roving abroad, and farre removed from it? and how then bee our hearts affected in time of our singing? To instance in some particulars.

Doe it thou when thou singest,

lift mine heart to thee,

my God and guide must just, Psal. 25.

Doe it thou then lift up thine heart and soule to the Lord in heaven? or rather, are not thy thoughts depressed and kept downe by earthly cogitations? and thou hast not so much as a thought of that glorious Majestie, and when thou singest out of the 19. Psalme, *That the bow and the bow-combe are not so sweet as the law of God*, art thou so affected toward the word and Commandments of God? I feare me in most of us, there is no such matter: wee sing and sound it out, that the Word is most precious, but in the meane time, our hearts have no feeling of the sweetnesse of it; is this to sing Psalmes with a grace in our hearts? No, no, such manner of singing is rather gracelesse.

And we must learne to reforme it, and remember thou whensoever thou singest a Psalme, thine heart must goe with thy mouth, and thine heart must bee full of heavenly joy, and stirred up and affected according to the matter thou singest: and if it be not so, surely, then thy singing is but lip-labour, and highly displeasing to God: that thou maist therefore sing with grace in thine heart, come to that holy exercise prepared, be able to say with David, Psal. 57. 7. *My heart is prepared, O God, my heart is prepared, I will sing and give praise.*

And if thou aske me when thy heart is prepared?

I answer, when the assurance of thy sinnes pardoned, the perswasion of Gods favour towards thee, the hatred of sinne, the love of the life to come, and the like, doe stirre thee up to the singing of Psalmes: and looke that thine heart bee thus tuned and prepared, that thy singing may come from the inward affection of thine heart, as the chiefe instrument of that heavenly musick: and know we this, when men are not affected according to the matter that is sung, nor have their hearts full of heavenly joy in singing of Psalmes, it argueth plainly their hearts are not right within them.

And againe, as verball prayers (through the just judgement of God) bring men to great blockishnesse, so vocall singing, singing onely with the voyce and not with the heart, will in time bring an exceeding deadnesse and dullnesse on men, that they shall sing onely upon custome and fashion, without any feeling at all: and therefore labour thou to prepare thine heart, and to set thine heart in tune, when thou art to sing Psalmes, that so thou mayest sing with a grace in thine heart, even with surpassing heavenly delight, and that thine heart may bee mooved and affected, according to the matter which thou singest.

The next thing here required by the Apostle in our singing Psalmes, is, that

it be to the Lord, singing with a grace in your hearts to the Lord: so then our singing of Psalmes and spirituall songs, must be onely to the praise and glory of God, even with reverence to his great and glorious Majesty, and with acknowledgement of all honour and praise to be due to him alone. For why? singing of Psalmes is a speciall part of Gods worship, and therefore may not be yeelded to any other but the Lord alone.

And againe, to have Psalmes sung to him, is a speciall part of the Lords glory, which he will not communicate to any creature, man or Angell, no nor to the humanity of Christ, though that be exalted farre above the Angels: howsoever indeed it is true, that we may sing Psalmes to Christ, and call on him in prayer; yet our singing and praying to him, must be as he is *Diav. 2000*, God and man in one person: his humanity is not to be worshipped with religious worship, for it selfe, or by it selfe. Because by it selfe it is a creature, but as it is personally united to the God-head, and as it is part of that person which is true God: so the humanity of Christ is to be worshipped with one and the same worship as the God-head is, as appeares plainly, Hebr. chap. 1. verf. 6. it is there said, that the Angels must worship the first begotten Son of God, brought into the world that is, Christ God and man (but that by the way)

Hence it is cleere, that no part of religious worship is to bee given to the humanity of Christ apart and severed from his God-head: and therefore Psalmes are not to be sung to his humanity alone; and if not to the humanity of Christ, then much lesse to any other creature; and it proves it strongly that our singing of Psalmes must bee directed to the Lord, and to his praise and glory alone.

And herein are our adversaries the Papists justly to bee taxed, as in praying, so in singing they offend little regarding to keepe within comp. He of this duty. In their Masse-booke wee finde they have songs of praise to the Virgin *Mary*, in which they blasphemously call her their mediatrix, and say shee is placed in the Throne with God the Father, and that shee raignes with God: yea, they sing to her that shee is the mother of grace, the fountaine of mercy, with a number of like praises that they sing to her most wickedly and most blasphemously: for there is no meere creature (either in heaven or in earth) worthy to bee joyned with God, and to have any part of divine worship, such as is singing of Psalmes, and spirituall songs; he is God over all, and he alone is to be magnified and praised for ever.

And for the use of this to our selves, wee must remember to whom the singing of Psalmes must bee directed, namely, to the Lord. Say thou with *Moses*, Exod. 15. 1. I will sing unto the Lord, who is the fountaine of all the good things I enjoy. When thou hast occasion to rejoyce for some blessing of God vouchsafed unto thee, and to shew forth thy joy by singing of Psalmes, then sing not to thy selfe, that is, in thy singing have not respect, neither looke thou to thine owne wit or paines, as if thine owne wit or paines had beepe the onely cause of that blessing: nor yet to thy friends and meanes, to thy fortune, to thy bagge or baggage, nor to any other thing. Let no creature robbe God of his right: sing thou to the Lord, and direct thy singing to him alone, even to the praise and glory of his name alone, who alone is the author and giver of every good gift.

One thing in generall may bee further gathered from these words, (*In Psalmes, and Hymnes, and spirituall songs, singing with a grace in your hearts to the Lord*) namely this: It is cleere by this text, that the exercise of singing is lawfull, if it bee both for matter and manner as the Apostle hath here set downe: if the matter bee a Psalm, or a Hymne, or a Spirituall song, and if it bee with a grace in our hearts to the praise of God, then (no question of it) singing is lawfull.

Doff. 12.

Our singing of Psalmes and spirituall songs must be onely to the praise and glory of God.

Reason.

Note.

Vjs. 1.

The Papists taxed for singing songs of praise to the Virgin *Mary*.

Vjs. 2.

We must remember to direct our singing of Psalmes to the praise of God.

Doct. 12.
Playing upon
an instrument
of musicke, and
the harmony
of many mu-
sicall instru-
ments toge-
ther, is a law-
full thing, if it
be rightly used.

Note.

Quest.
Answer.
The right use
of Musicke.

Use.
Reprooſe of
those that
abuse musicke.

Hence by proportion wee may gather, that playing upon an instrument of musicke is also lawfull; yea, the harmonie of many musicall instruments together is a lawfull thing, if it be rightly used, and as it ought to bee. And that it is lawfull, the excellent use of it makes it manifest: it is of use to stirre up spirituall joy and cheerefulnesse in the heart. We reade, 2. King. 3. 15. that when that great Prophet *Elisea* saw his minde (through the zeale of Gods glory) troubled in respect of the King of Israel, hee called for a minstrell, and so by meanes of his playing, his minde was refreshed, and the heat and zeale of his affliction was stired up to speake the word of God.

And hence it is that wee use to sing a Psalm before the Sermon; it is not a matter of complement to grace the action, but to stirre up our hearts more cheerefully to speake, and heare the word of God: and therefore (double use) musicke, either in singing, or playing on instruments (being of such excellent use) is a lawfull thing and may be used, if it be rightly used, and that wee are especially to looke unto, that we use it aright.

Some may say, how is that, when doe we rightly use it?

I answer, when we use it to a right end, with moderation, and in due season; when we use it to stirre up spirituall joy, and to make us more fit to glorifie God and to walke in our callings; and when we use it moderately, not making (of a recreation) an occupation, not playing to play, that is, not suffering our hearts to be hollen away, and snared in the pleasure of our musicke; and when wee use it seasonably, not using it when we should be otherwise exercised, as in prayer, in hearing the Word, in meditating on that we have heard.

And in these respects (if we duly examine our selves) wee shall finde that most of us are faulty, and justly to be reprov'd. It is (no doubt) with many of us, as it was with the people in *Amos* his time, *Amos* chap. 6. ver. 5. They make *David* their defence for musicke abused: yea, doe not many use musicke, not to stirre up spirituall joy, but to stirre up their wanton lusts, tripping and dancing, after their musicke wantonly, and immodestly, yea and that excessively; even spending whole dayes and nights, and that in Tavernes, and like places? Yea, doe not many thus use it on the Sabbath day? What is more common than at our weddings on the Sabbath day, to doe as the people did, *Exod.* chap. 33. ver. 6. To *eat and drinke, and to rise up and play*; and then to attend to our musicke, and to dallie and dance? Yea, some thinke they may lawfully doe it when the publike exercise is done, then they thinke they may follow their dancing and gaming. But know thou (whosoever thou art) that so doing, thou keepest a day, not to the Lord, but to the devill, and thou dost then more dishonour God, and hurt thy selfe, than in any day of the weeke besides: remember it therefore, that thou maist lawfully use musicke, if thou rightly use it; if thou use it to a right end, to stirre up spirituall joy with moderation, and in due time and season; and if thou faile in one or more of these circumstances thou dost abuse it, and shalt one day answer for the abuse of it: yea (without repentance) the Lord will judge thee, as that evill servant, *Matth.* 24. 49. who is there said to eate and drinke with the drunken. It is lawfull to eate and drinke, but if men eate and drinke with the drunken, that is, excessively abusing their meate and drinke, they shall receive an heavie doome: so if thou abuse thy musicke (which may be lawfully used) without repentance for that sione, thy portion shall be with hypocrites.

Verf. 17. And whatsoever ye shall doe in word or deed, doe all in the name of the Lord Iesus, giving thanks to God even the Father by him.

IN this verse the Apostle goeth on to exhort the Colossians to other duties of the first Table of the Commandements; as to invocation & calling upon God, and to thanksgiving. In this exhortation, hee commends to them a generall rule,

rule, reaching to all things not specified before: as if hee had said, Because it were infinite to write to you of all things particularly, take this that I now set before you, as a generall rule of all your sayings and doings whatsoever. Heere then the Apostle doth urge on the Colossians this generall; that whatsoever they did, they should doe it in the name of Christ, who is described by his title Lord, and by his name (*Iesus*) and withall the Apostle doth specifye and expresse more particularly what hee meanes by that generall; all whatsoever they should doe, namely, all words and all deeds whatsoever (saith he) ye shall doe in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Iesus; and he there staves not, but he further requires of them, that their sayings and doings should be with thanks to God [*giving thanks to God*] and that is enlarged, by shewing how God is to be conceived of them in their giving of thanks to him, namely, not onely as the Creator of all things, but as a father: and then by whom (as their mediator) they should present and offer up their thanks to him, namely, by Christ: and so the summe and substance of this verse is an exhortation: to say and doe all things whatsoever in the name of Christ, with thanks to God the Father, through him the only mediator betweene God and us.

The parts of this exhortation are these two.

First, that whatsoever we shall doe in word or deed, we doe it in the name of the Lord Iesus.

Secondly, whatsoever is done of us, we give thanks to God by Christ.

Come we to the first of these: *And whatsoever ye shall doe in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Iesus*, that is, what business soever ye shall enterprife, what matter soever ye shall enter upon, and take in hand to performe. For the word *doe*, is here extended by the Apostle, as wee see, both to word and deed; and therefore we are to conceive his meaning largely, and generally [*in word or deed*] that is, either in speech or action [*doe all*] doe all those businesses and matters in the name of the Lord Iesus.

It may bee said, sometimes men take in hand wicked workes, are they to doe them in the name of the Lord Iesus?

Ans. The Apostles meaning is not that wee should doe wicked workes in the name of the Lord Iesus, but that wee should onely doe such things as may be done in his name, and that the things we take in hand, either in speech or action, be lawfull and good, such as may be done, and then that we doe them in the name of the Lord Iesus.

In the name of the Lord Iesus This forme of speech hath many acceptions in Scripture, I will not stand to remember them. Heere it doth imply thus much, that what business or matter soever wee enterprife, wee take it in hand, with invocation, with calling on God, in the name and mediation of Christ, and that is cleare by the words following, that we are to give thanks to God the Father by him, that is, in his name and mediation, as appeares plainly, Ephes. 5. 20. Thus then conceive we the Apostles meaning in these words [*And whatsoever ye shall doe in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Iesus*] As if hee had said, What matter or business soever you enterprife, and take in hand, either in speech or action, let it bee such as you enter upon with prayer: and when you enter upon it, and take it in hand, looke that your enterprising of it bee with invocation and calling upon God in the name of Christ.

Now first observe we, that the Apostle here sets before us a generall rule, according to which, whatsoever matter or business wee take in hand, either in speech or action, must be framed; that whatsoever wee doe in word or deede, wee must doe it in the name of Christ, even with calling upon God in his name.

Hence ariseth this point, that all matters, businesses, and workes wee take in hand, either in speech or action, them must bee such as wee may present and set before

Interpretation.

Quest.

Ans.

The meaning of the text.

Observe.

Do. 1.
Every worke and business

we take in hand, in speech or action, must be such as wee may present before the Lord in prayer. Reasons.

1

before the Lord in prayer, they must bee such as we may crave the Lord his direction, his assistance, and his blessing, in and upon them through Christ; and whatsoever works or businesse we may not commend to God in prayer, that we may not say, or doe.

For why? there is no matter, businesse or work we may take in hand, but that we have either expresse warrant for, or (at least) approbation for it, in the word of God, and a promise of a blessing, either direct, or by good consequent to bee gathered, belonging to it: and therefore there is no matter or businesse we may enter upon, but that we may by faith (resting on the commandment and promise of God) commend to God in prayer.

2

And againe, even in matters of businesse of this world, wee must carry ourselves, not onely justly, but religiously, saying, and doing all we say or doe, as in the presence of Almighty God: as the Lord said to Abraham, Gen. 17. 1. *I am God all-sufficient, walke before me, and be thou upright*: and therefore (doubtlesse) all matters, businesse and workes wee take in hand, either in speech, or action, must bee such as wee may set before the eye of the Lord, and offer and present to him in prayer, craving his direction in them, and his blessing upon them in the name of Christ; it were easie to make this further manifest.

Vse.

When wee goe about any matter or businesse, we are to consider whether we may commend it to God in prayer, or no, and accordingly to doe it, or leave it undone.

But for the use, let it bee laid up in our hearts, and remembered, and whensoever thou goest about any matter or businesse, learne then thus to debate, and thus to thinke with thy selfe: Is this thing (that I goe now about) such as I may commend to the Lord in prayer? May this that I am about, bee said, or may this bee done in the name of the Lord Iesus, even with thy calling on God in his name? Surely then I may take it in hand with cheerefulnesse and comfort; but on the other side; is this (I am about to doe) such a thing as I dare not set before the Lord in prayer, nor call on him for a blessing in the name of Christ? or at least, I doubt whether I may so doe or no, surely then it is good for mee to forbear, and to take heed how I adventure on it.

Oh that men would thus thinke and reason with themselves, when they are about to take in hand any thing, either in speech or action; no doubt it would bee a notable meane to keepe them from doing many things they doe amisse. Would men (if this were thought on and remembered) then take upon them by their speech, to give false evidence and testimony against an innocent, or to make a lye for the defence of a guilty person? Would they then enter on their businesse, and take in hand workes of their calling on the Sabbath day; with many other things that might be reckoned up? but these are too common amongst men, and therefore I instance in them. Would men (I say) take in hand to doe these, and many like things, if they did remember, that they are to take in hand nothing, either in speech or action, but that they may doe in the name of Christ, and may commend to the Lord in prayer, in, and through him? surely no, if they had any dramme of the feare of God, they would not; and therefore remember this as a rule of excellent use to guide thee in all things thou takest in hand, either in speech or action: that which thou maiest take in hand, either to speake or doe, it must bee such as thou maiest doe in the name of Christ, and commend to God in his name: and if the thing thou art about to speake, or doe, be such, then goe on with boldnesse: if it bee not, take heed how thou dost it: and howsoever it may bring thee in worldly profit, yet because thou canst not commend thy worke to the Lord in prayer, thou canst not looke for a blessing on that profit, but rather (indeed) the curse of God upon it: yea, (without thy repentance, and Gods great mercy towards thee) thou shalt finde the curse of God upon that; and that being laid to the rest of thy goods, even upon all that ever thou hast, Habak. 2. 9. And therefore ever remember this, that all matters and workes that thou takest in hand must be such, as that thou maiest commend

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to God in prayer, and say, the Lord for his Christs sake blisse them, and give good successe unto them.

The next thing that offers it selfe to our consideration (as a duty laid before us in this generall rule) is this. All our wayes and workes ought to be entered into with prayer: when wee enterprife and take in hand any businesse, either in speech or action, wee must call on God (in the name of Christ) for a blessing upon it.

Looke on the example of *Abrahams* servant, Genes. 24. 12. Hee prayed that the Lord would send him good speed, and have mercy on his master *Abraham*. And *Ruth* 2. 4. *Boaz* prayed for his reapers (for that salutation of his, *The Lord be with you*, was (no doubt) a lifting up of his heart with his voice, that the Lord would strengthen and blisse their labours) And *Acts* 20. 36. we finde that *Paul* (before he tooke shipping) kneeled downe and prayed. And by these examples (and many more that might be brought to this purpose) wee are plainly taught, that wee are to take in hand the labours and workes of our callings with prayer. If opportunitie serve not to make a set prayer at the beginning of every worke, yet at least, even in the worke, we are to lift up our hearts to the Lord, when wee are labouring and sweating, and in the midst of our greatest employment.

And the reasons of this are manifest.

First, without the blessing of God all our labours are vaine. Psalm. 127. 1. 2. *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vaine that build it: and it is in vaine to rise early, and to lie downe late, and to eat the bread of sorrow.* Therefore we are to call upon God for a blessing upon them.

Again, by prayer our labours are sanctified: howsoever they may be lawfull workes, and warranted by the word, and so good in their kinde, and in themselves; yet to us they are not sanctified without prayer. That which the Apostle saith of the creatures, 1. Tim. 4. 5. is also true of the works of our lawfull callings, they are sanctified by the word and prayer.

First therefore, this serves to checke and reprove such as labour in their callings, and are very sedulous and painfull in their worke; they toyle, and moyle, but they have no care to sanctifie their labours, and to call on God for a blessing upon them. Doe not many of us rise early, and so soone as ever they are up, they fall to their worke, and continue at it till they are weary, and then lie downe, never calling on God before, nor giving thanks after? Is this a labour in our callings pleasing to God? No, no, if thou so thinke, thou art deceived; thou must know, that labour and toyle (though it bee in a lawfull calling) is not simply good, and a thing wherein God is pleased (for wicked men may doe it) but labour sanctified, is the labour that the Lord liketh, and will blisse: and wicshall remember, that thou labouring and working, and yet having no care to call on God for a blessing on thy labour, thou labourest not in the name of the Lord Iesus.

Thou wilt say, in whose name then?

Surely in thine owne name, even in confidence of thine owne strength; and thou art one of those *Iames* speaks of, chap. 4. 13. that say, to day wee will doe such or such a thing, such a peece of businesse we will dispatch this day, but never lift up their hearts to the Lord, desiring him to enable them to doe it; and so doing, it is a bold presumption in thee, and one time or other cannot escape the punishing hand of God: and therefore take heed of it, and ever remember that thou must enter on thy labours with prayer: at least every morning call thou to God for a blessing on all thy labour that day, and in the heat of thy worke, when thou art most earnest about it, still now and then lift up thine heart in prayer.

Again, is it so, that when wee take in hand the ordinary workes of our callings,

Doct. 2.

All our wayes and workes are to be taken in hand with prayer.

Reasons.

1

2

Vs. 1.

Reprooffe of such as care not to sanctifie their labours, by prayer.

Vs. 2.

If we may not enter on the workes of ordinary callings, without prayer in the, much lesse on the duties of Gods worship.

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lings, wee are to call upon God, in the name of the Lord Iesus Christ for a blessing; then doubtlesse much more ought wee so to doe, when wee enter on the holy duties of Gods worship: as to heare the Word, to receiue the Sacraments, and the like. And herein the most of us are much faulty, and justly to be blamed: doe not most men and women, either come from their beds, or from some ordinary businesse, to the Church, never caring to call upon God for a blessing on that holy businesse.

Well, let us know, that so doing, though the workes of hearing the Word, receiving the Sacraments, bee holy in themselves, yet they are not sanctified unto us; and howsoever we renounce the opinion of the Papists, touching *op. operatum*, yet indeed wee doe as they doe, we rest in the worke done: yea, we comming to the Church, without calling upon God before we come, wee come not in the name of God, but in our owne names, and can wee then looke for a blessing? Surely no, but rather for a curse, and that our hearing of the Word should turne to our deeper condemnation; and therefore especially remember (when thou comest to doe the worke of the Lord in his immediate worship and service) that then thou call on God (in the name of Christ) for a blessing, that it above all other things may be sanctified unto thee.

Now the Apostle saith [*whatsoever ye doe*] and then addes [*in word or deed*] it is cleere, that even speech is sometimes a worke: as the speech of the Magistrate, or of the Minister. And therefore, light matter (as some esteeme it) but upon that I will not stand, neither will I enter to speake of the point of mediation, in whose name wee are to pray, till wee come to the last words of this verse. [*by him*] Onely one thing wee are to marke, that the Apostle saith not, by the name of Christ, though by his name many great workes may bee done, but in the name of the Lord Iesus: no doubt hee thus spake upon purpose, to teach us thus much:

That wee must bee able to doe all our workes in the name of Christ with comfort, and so as they may be (in his mediation) accepted. For indeed men may doe great workes by the name of Christ, and yet finde no comfort in the doing of them; they may by his name prophesie and cast out diuels, and doe many great workes, Math. 7. 22. and yet finde no comfort; nay, they may (notwithstanding these great workes) goe to hell.

Therefore if we would finde comfort in our labours, we must doe them in the mediation of Christ, and so as wee are sure they are accepted in, and through him.

How is that, may some say?

When we have part in the merit of Christ by faith, then our labours, and all the good things wee doe are accepted in him, and there is comfort in the doing of them: whereas otherwise, if we have no part in the merit of Christ, the best works we doe, or can doe, though it be the winning of soules, have no comfort in them; they may bring comfort and good to others, but neuer will they bring comfort to our owne soules; therefore labour thou to have part in the merit of Christ, and never rest, till by faith thou dost apprehend his merit, and apply it to thy selfe, and then thy workes and good things thou doest, will bee pleasing to God, and in and through the mediation of Christ, thou shalt finde comfort in the doing of them.

Come we to the second part of the Apostles exhortation heere urged, namely this, that whatsoever is done of us, either in word or deed, wee give thanks to God by Christ [*giving thanks to God even the father by him*] giving thanks to God, that is, with joy and gladnesse of heart, magnifying and praising God, with a true and serious acknowledgement of his goodnesse and mercy, opening your mouthes to render thanks and praise to him [*even the Father*] In the originall it is [*and the Father*] the conjunction [*and*] doth not here note diversity of person, but

Dott. 3.
We must be able to doe all our workes in the name of Christ with comfort, and so as they may be in his mediation accepted.

Quest.
Ans.

Vse.
Wee must labour to have part in the merit of Christ, that our workes may be accepted, in, and through him.

Interpre-
tation.

but is put to declare how God is to be conceived of us in our giving thanks unto him, namely, as our father in Christ his sonne, in whom hee hath loved us, and made us accepted in his sight, Ephes. 1.6. and of his fathers love towards us in him, hath bestowed on us, that for which wee gave thanks, and many other benefits (*by him*) that is by Christ as your mediator and in his name, Eph. 5.20. This then is the meaning of these words, as if the Apostle had said more largely thus: With joy and gladnesse of heart, and with a serious acknowledgement of the goodnesse of God, opening your mouths to magnifie and to render thanks to him as your good and gracious Father in Christ, offering up your praise and thanksgiving by Christ (as your Mediatour) even in his name, and through him alone.

Now first heere wee may plainly see this duty laid before us. That as we are to enter on our workes and busineses, and to beginne what matter soever wee take in hand, either in speech or action with prayer, so wee are to end the same with thanksgiving: It is not enough for us to come to God before our worke, craving his direction and blessing in and upon the same, but wee must come to him after it is ended with thanksgiving, having then our hearts enlarged, and our mouthes filled with praise and thanksgiving to him.

And for this also wee have examples in the Scripture, Gen. 24. *Abrahams* servant not only prayed before his journey, verse the twelfth, but verse the twenty seventh he gave thanks to the Lord, for that he had given him good successe in his journey, and he said, *Blessed be the Lord God of my Master Abraham*, which hath not withdrawne his mercy, and his truth from my master: 2 Chron. 20. we have a notable example to this purpose, we there find that a new and a great army came against *Iehoshaphat* and his people, and they were to goe out and to meet them, and to fight against them: that good king and the people, not only humbled themselves before they went out, and *Iehoshaphat* made an excellent prayer, from verse the sixth, to the end of the twelfth, but also afterwards when the Lord had given them a marvellous victorie over their enemies, then they blessed the Lord, and gave thanks to him for the same, vers. 26. they assembled themselves in the valley of *Beraebah*, for there they blessed the Lord, saith the text, and verse 28. they came againe to *Ierusalem* with viols and with harps, and with trumpets even unto the house of the Lord; and to these might be added other examples teaching us the same thing, that wee are not onely to enter upon our workes, and beginne them with prayer, but that wee must also end them with thanksgiving to God, with chearefulnesse of heart, opening our mouthes to magnifie the name of the Lord, for the same: the reasons of this dutie are these.

First, because God is the principall agent in every good worke and businesse done by us, wee are but as tooles and instruments in his hand, and therefore of right, praise and thanks belongs to him for the doing of it.

And againe, because thanksgiving must ever reach as farre as petition, what wee make petition and request for at the hand of the Lord, the same wee are to give thanks for: so hath the Apostle taught us, *Philippians* 4. verse 6. In all things let your requests be shewed unto God in prayer and supplication, with giving of thanks: he extends the one as farre as the other, and therefore as wee beginne our worke and businesse with prayer, so wee must end it with thanksgiving, alwaies praising God for his mercy and blessing, in and upon the same.

Objection. Haply some may say, but what if the Lord crosse us in our lawfull workes begunne in the name of Christ, and taken in hand with prayer, and wee have not good successe in our businesse, are wee then to blesse God and to give him thanks?

I answer, wee are even then to give thanks to the Lord, for howsoever the

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The meaning
of the text.

Doff. 4.

As we are to
beginne our
workes and bu-
sineses with
prayer, so wee
must end
them with
thanksgiving.

Reason. 1

Reason 2

Object.

Answ.

the successe answer not our desire and expectation, and so (in seeming, and in our conceit) is not good, yet if we be in Christ, certainly it is good, and for the best to us. The Lord sees it would not be good for us to prosper in that businesse, and hee in his wise providence will so dispose it as it shall be to our good according to that *Romanes 8.28.* All things worke together for the best unto them that love God, even to them that are called of his purpose: and the Lord doeth sometimes crosse us in some good businesse and with prayer taken in hand, to humble us for something wherein we have failed and not done as we ought, as haply we have not prayed with fervency of spirit, as wee ought, but coldly or customarily, or the like, and therefore howsoever the successe of our labours taken in hand with prayer be not answerable to our desire and expectation, yet notwithstanding that, wee are to blesse God for it, and still it remaines our duty, that what worke or businesse soever wee take in hand, either in speech or action with prayer, wee are likewise at the end of the same, to open our mouths in praise and thanksgiving to God, wee must not onely doe all our workes in the name of Christ, but wee must doe them also with giving thanks to God in his name.

Now in this duty, most of us are farre short and much wanting.

Especially if the Lord crosse us never so little. In any businesse wee take in hand, if the things wee take in hand, succede not according to our desire, what shall wee then heare from many of us, giving thanks to God? Nay rather, muttering and murmuring, yea sometimes cursing and banning, and wishing a plague or a mischief to light on the thing or person by whose meanes wee are crossed, this is too common amongst us: now what is this but to bee displeased with the worke of Gods providence, and in deede to murmur against God himselfe. Thy duty is to begin thy businesse with prayer, and howsoever it succede, though contrary to thy desire, yet to blesse God, and with joy and gladnesse of heart to give him thanks, and remember if thou belong to Christ, thou hast reason so to doe, for then thou being crossed, the Lord sees it good, thou shouldest be so, and hee will dispose it to thy good.

Oh but this is hard to flesh and blood.

It is true:

But thou hast more in thee than flesh and blood, even the Spirit and grace, else is that crosse a curse unto thee; but (to go on in the application of this duty) if wee duly examine our selves, and call our selves to a strict account, I feare me, the most of us will bee found wanting in this duty of thankfulness, even then when our labours succede well, and wee prosper in them according to our desire. Where is (almost) the man or the woman to bee found that gives true thanks to God for the same? Haply wee doe it for forme or fashion in some few words, as I praise God for my good successe this day in my businesse, but where is our thanksgiving to God with a serious meditation and due acknowledgment of his goodnesse and mercy? where is that affection of *David*, opening the mouth wide in magnifying the name of God, as *David* did, *1 Chro. 29.* reade the place from vers. 10. to the end of the 13. vers. 11. hee saith: Thine Oh Lord is greatnesse and power, and glorie, and victorie, and praise, for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine, thine is the kingdome, Oh Lord, and thou excellest as head over all, &c. See, hee could not finde words sufficient to set out the affection of his heart, where is this manner of thanksgiving to bee found?

Surely it is rare, and hard to bee found amongst men in these daies. Well, to stir us up and to helpe us forward in this duty, I might urge the excellency of it being a peculiar exercise of the Angels in heaven.

But consider wee onely these two things.

First, if wee have not our mouths opened aswell in hearty thanksgiving to God

Pse. 1.
Many faile in this duty, especially if the Lord crosse them but a little in any businesse they take in hand.

Object.
Ans.

Pse. 2.

to God after our labours (howsoever the success bee) as before to call on him for a blessing upon them. Surely, it argues our hearts are not sound within us: for an hypocrite may desire and pray for a good thing, and pray for it from the bottome of his heart; and yet have no good and godly desire, but a desire of self-love, but he can never give true and hearty thanks to God for any blessing received, hee may fumble out some words of thanksgiving, but hee can never truly and heartily praise God. And if wee then have not our mouthes filled with hearty thanksgiving unto God, after that our labours are ended, it is an evident argument our hearts are but hollow, and there is no soundnesse of grace in them.

And againe, consider that thanks and praise is never truly given to God for any mercy or blessing, but through Gods mercy it brings downe another mercy and a further blessing. Looke on the example of the leper, Luke the seventeenth hee returning and giving thanks to Christ for his cleansing, had also his sinne forgiven, as wee may gather by those words verse 18. *God thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole.*

If then wee would make it cleare, to the comfort of our owne hearts that our hearts are not hollow, but that there is soundnesse of grace in them, and if wee would have mercie after mercie, and one blessing after another, through Gods mercy descending downe upon us; let us then be stirred up, not onely to come to God in prayer, when we take in hand our workes and businesses, but also to come to him after, with our hearts enlarged, and our mouthes opened, and full of true praise and thanksgiving to God.

The next thing that offers it selfe to our consideration, is from these words (*even the Father.*) Whence wee are taught thus much: That our giving thanks to God must be to him, as to our gracious father in Christ. When the Lord hath vouchsafed to us any good thing, or blessing, wee must bee able to give him thanks for it, as for a blessing comming to us from his fatherly love in Christ, as a blessing comming to us in, and through his Sonne Christ Iesus: we must be able to use the Apostles forme of praise and thanksgiving, Ephes. 1. 3. Blessed bee God, even the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ, which hath blessed us with all Spirituall blessings in heavenly things in Christ, with Spirituall, yea with this or that temporall blessing in Christ Iesus.

Men commonly thinke it enough, if they can say, I thanke the Lord, hee hath given mee such and such a good thing, though they be not able to say, such and such good things in Christ. Now there is no comfort in such thanksgiving, the verie heathen might goe so farre.

Wee must be able to give thanks to God for blessings vouchsafed to us, as comming to us from God our gracious Father in Christ, as tokens and pledges of his love, in the Sonne of his love Christ Iesus; and this we shall never doe, till wee know that God is our Father in Christ, and we have his Spirit bearing witness with our Spirits, that wee are his children; and therefore wee are never to rest till wee come to that knowledge, and that assurance to give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ, for any blessing, or good thing vouchsafed to us onely. A blessed and good thing in it selfe, and not to us in Christ, is so farre from being comfortable, as indeed, it doth rather bring in discomfort; it gives thee to understand that, that good thing is given, to leave thee without excuse, and for further increase of thy condemnation, and therefore never rest till thou bee able to blesse God, and to give him thanks for good things vouchsafed to thee, from his good and gracious hand, in, and through Christ.

The last thing remains, which this verse doth offer to our consideration, touching the point of mediation, in whose name wee are to come to God in prayer, and thanksgiving, and that is cleare by this text, that in Christ his Sonne

A a a

We are to practise the duty of thanksgiving to God, after our labours & workes. Motives to stir us up unto it.

Note.

Ded. 3.

Our thanksgiving to God must be to him as to our gracious father in Christ.

Vse.

Wee must labour to know and be assured that God is our father in Christ, that we so give him thanks for good things vouchsafed unto us. A motive thereunto.

Ded. 6.

Wee are to come to God in prayer and

thanksgiving
onely in the
name and
mediation of
Christ.

Reasons.

2

3

4

Object.

Answer.

Vse.

Confutation
of the media-
tion of Angels
and Saints
held by the
papists.

Object.

alone wee are to pray and give thanks unto God, wee must doe all things in the name of Christ, and give thanks to God by him, I will further prove this by some reasons,

First, he alone must bee our mediator and intercessor betweene God and us, who is able to take away sinnes that binders us from comming to God, but Christ only is able to doe that, I hebrewes 7.25. He is able perfectly to save them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them; and hence it is that redemption and mediation are joyned together, 1 Tim. 2.5. 6. Therefore Christ onely is our Mediator, and in his name alone, must we pray, and give thanks to God.

Secondly, hee in whose name wee must pray and give thanks to God, must be able not onely to remove sinne, death, and all punishment from us, but to procure righteousness, life and the favour of God towards us, for wee are taught to come to God, as to a father, and not a Iudge, and to say, our Father, but Christ onely doth this, Gal. 4.5. therefore he alone must be our Mediatour.

Thirdly, wee are commanded in the word of God, to pray in the name of Christ, Iohn 16.24. and no where in the name of any other. Therefore in his name alone must wee pray and give thanks to God.

Fourthly, he must bee our Mediator in whose name wee have promise to bee heard, but in Christ onely wee have this promise. Iohn 14.13. 14. If yee shall aske any thing in my name, I will doe it. 2 Cor. 1.20. In him all the promises of God are yea, and Amen, (that is) are confirmed, and fulfilled; therefore in his name alone must wee come to God in prayer and thanksgiving.

Haply some will object, that which wee finde, Rom. 8.26. The Spirit it selfe helpeth our infirmities, for wee know not what to pray as wee ought, but the spirit it selfe maketh request for us with sighes which cannot bee expressed.

I have heretofore answered this (but in a word to remember it) the Apostles meaning is, that the Spirit doth breathe into our hearts such motives, whereby wee call on God earnestly with sighes that cannot bee expressed, for so it followeth; and therefore, notwithstanding this, it remaines a truth that in Christ his name alone wee are to pray, and give thanks to God.

And this we are to hold against our adversaries, the papists, who set up other Mediators betweene God and us, as Angels and Saints; yea, they have found out a new distinction for this point, that to wit, Christ is Mediator of redemption, but the Saints of intercession; wherein they robbe Christ of a great part of his honour belonging to his Priesthood: for Christ hath not onely by his owne sufficient sacrifice of himselfe, consecrated them that are sanctified, Hebr. 10.14. but also sits at the right hand of his Father, to make request for them, Rom. 8.34. Christ his Priesthood is everlasting, Heb. 7.24. therefore his intercession is perpetuall.

The Papists alledge some places of Scripture to proove their mediation of Angels and Saints, but they are either propheticall visions, or hypotheticall sentences, sentences conditionall: as that, Ier. 15.1. Though *Moses* and *Samuel* stood before mee, yet mine affection could not be toward this people, that is, if *Moses*, *Samuel*, and the like, I will not stand to remember them, only that which they bring to prove that wee may plead our owne worthinesse in prayer, and desire to be heard for our owne good works I will briefly answer: to this purpose they alledge the example of *David*, Psal. 86.2. Preserve thou my soule for I am mercifull. Oh God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee. And of *Hezekiah* a King. 20.3. I beseech thee O Lord, remember now, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. Heereupon they conclude that we may pray to God in confidence of our owne good works.

I answer them, *David* and *Hezekiah* in the places cited, did not plead the merit

merit of their righteousness, but onely testifie that they were the children of God regenerate, and such men to whom God hath promised to be good and gracious, they did onely assure themselves that Gods promise of helpe and deliverance belonged to them in particular, because they were of that number spoken of, Psalme 34. 15, And thus farre wee may use the benefit of good conscience, and our owne integritie (namely) to confirme us in the promises of God made to his children, but we must ever remember to come to God in prayer and thanksgiving, in the name and merit of Christ alone.

Verl. 18. *Wives submit your selves unto your husbands, as it is comely in the Lord.*

THe Apostle having absolved the first part of this Chapter containing an exhortation to all Christians, generally as they are Christians and professors of the Gospell, from the first verse hitherto: in this 18. verse hee enters on the second part of it, and hee continues that, to the second verse of the fourth Chapter, and this part is a comprehension of certaine speciall duties of Christians, they stand in relation one to another in some particular state or condition of life: it containes speciall exhortations addressed to certaine sorts of persons, and particularly, and (namely) to all the ordinarie parts of a familie, both inferiours, and superiours.

And therein the Apostle holds this order.

First, he exhorts to the duties of those that are more neerely and straitly tyed one to another, as to the duties of husbands, and wives, parents, and children.

And then to the duties of those who are lesse straitly tyed one to another, as masters, and servants: and throughout he begins with the duty of inferiours, as wives, children, servants, and then comes to the duties of superiours, husbands, parents, and masters.

Here therefore, first the Apostle begins with the dutie of wives, and saith, *Wives submit your selves unto your husbands, as it is comely in the Lord.* And in this verse we have these things in generall laid before us.

First, an exhortation to wives, to submit themselves to their husbands, and that generally, or indefinitely propounded.

Secondly, an argument to back and strengthen that exhortation, taken from the decorum, comeliness, and decency of it, that it is a comely and decent thing for them so to do.

Thirdly, the manner of their subjection, or a limitation of that dutie of their subjection, that it must be in the Lord, in the last words, *in the Lord.*

(*Submit your selves*) The word properly signifieth bee ordered, or placed in order under another: the meaning is according to your inferiour order and place, submit your selves: it is the same word with that, Rom. 13. 1. (*To your husbands*) the words are to your owne husbands, as it is comely, or as it is meet, and as it becometh you (*in the Lord*) The meaning of that forme of speech, is thus much, so farre forth as it may stand with the true feare of God, and with your obedience to his will, so as you may still hold pietie and good conscience towards God, as wee may gather by the same phrase, 1 Cor. 7. 39. Or thus: in things lawfull, and agreeable to the will of the Lord. Thus they conceive wee the exhortation of the Apostle, as if he had said: *Wives, according to your inferiour order and place, submit your selves to your owne husband, in so farre forth as you may stand with the true feare of God, and obedience to his will in things lawfull and agreeable to the will of God.*

Come we now to the matter of doctrine: and first observe we, that the Apostle having exhorted to generall duties that concerne all Christians, as they are

The second part of this Chapter.

The Apostles order in this part of the Chapter.

Interpretation.

The meaning of the text.

Observe.

A Christian must not on y carrie himsele well in the generall duties of Christianitie, but also in the special duties of his special calling.

Reasons.

1

Christians: hee there staies not, but comes now to exhort to speciall duties, that concerne certaine sort of persons particularly; he cometh to exhort to the duties that concerne Christians in their personall estates, and conditions of life.

Hence we are taught thus much: That it is not enough for a Christian to carrie himsele well, and as a Christian in the generall duties of a Christian, but he must also behave himsele Christianly in the speciall duties of his special calling. It is not sufficient for a Christian to bee of good conversation abroad, but his behaviour must be also good and such as it ought to be at home.

And hence it is that the holy Ghost directs his exhortation to severall sort of persons (especially in the family) to carrie themselves holily and justly: not onely heere, but in other places of Scripture, as Ephes. 5. vers. 6. and 1 Pet. 2. 2. Titus 2.

And the reasons of this are manifest.

First, every Christian having two callings (one generall to be a Christian, and the other speciall, as to bee an husband, a wife, a father, &c. and both these of God) it behoves him that he carrie himsele well, both in the one, and in the other, if he will approve himsele to God.

2

And againe, every Christian besides his generall standing, in which hee is to withstand the common enemy, and to set himsele against temptations to sinne (common to him with others) hee hath his peculiar place and standing appointed him by the Lord, in which hee is to bend his force, and to strive against temptations to sinne, proper to that place, such temptations as are laid against him in that his peculiar place and calling: and it is meete that hee shew himsele faithfull in them both, that (both in his generall and peculiar calling) he withstand temptations to sin: and therefore a Christian must not onely carrie himsele well in the generall duties of a Christian, but hee must also demean himsele as a Christian in the duties of his particular state and condition of life.

Use 1.

Reprooe of those who carry themselves well in shew in their generall calling, and yet faile in the duties of their special calling.

They therefore are justly to bee blamed and reprooved, who haply make a faire shew of good conversation in their generall calling, and yet carrie themselves badly in their speciall, they who would faine seeme to bee good Christians abroad, and yet behave themselves wretchedly at home, too many such there bee in the world. For example, looke upon a people assembled to heare the word of God, and you shall see, there is almost no man or woman amongst them but they carrie themselves reverently, all, and every one almost is alike reverent and attentive in hearing the Word, and every one almost, seemes to make conscience of that generall dutie in the Church: but goe home with many of them to their houses, and looke into their conversation at home, and there you shall easily see they make no conscience of their speciall duties, of duties that concerne them in their particular state and condition of life: there you shall see either the wife refusing to subject her selfe to her husband, or the husband bitter to his wife, the children stubborne and disobedient to their parents, or the parents too indulgent, or too rigorous towards their children, servants refractarie and careless in their duties, or masters unjust and unequal in their dealings toward their servants: yea, in some houses you shall see all sorts out of order, both husband, wife, and all the rest, neglecting the duties of their particular place and standing.

And againe, are there not some who carrie themselves in Christian duties, which they owe to men well, and without exception towards most men abroad in publick, but towards them, to whom they stand in some speciall relation, wretchedly, and wickedly? As the wife carries her selfe well, and in some tolerable sort towards all, save to her husband, and the husband demeanes himsele well, and gives some content to all save his wife, and so in other relations.

Now consider wee this, is this to carrie our selves as Christians ought to doe?

doe? No, no, this is but the forme of godlinesse without the power of it, as the Apostle calleth it, 2 Tim. 3. 5. this is but meete hypocrisie: is it like thou behavest thy selfe well (for conscience sake) towards them to whom thou owest but a generall dutie, and not to those to whom besides the generall thou art tyed with a speciall bond? no, no, it is but for thy credit (or thy profit) thou disguisest thy selfe abroad: for such a one thou art indeed, as thou art at home, there is the principall prooffe and triall of thee what thou art, and ever remember this: it is not enough for a Christian to carrie himselfe in generall duties as a Christian, but hee must also carrie himselfe well in the speciall duties of his particular place and calling, and the practice of the one without the other is but hypocrisie. And it is worth our marking, that the holy Ghost doth heere single out the duties and conditions of men and women severally, and hee speakes to wives apart, and to husbands apart, &c. thereby to leave us without all excuse, if we be not conformable even in our particular duties in this or that state or condition of life: for that which is spoken to all (such is our corruption) wee commonly putte off, as if it were spoken to none, but this wee cannot so passe over, no, not so much as with any colourable excuse, that may satisfie our owne sinfull corruption and ill judging conscience.

Observe further that the Apostle in setting downe the speciall duties of severall sorts of persons, hee begins first with the inferiours, as first hee teacheth the dutie of wives, and then of husbands, &c. and this order hee observes in other places, hereby teaching us:

That when wee are to deale with persons of severall estates and conditions, and to informe them in their duties, wee are rather to begin with the inferiours, than with the superiours: as when wee are to make peace betwene the inferiour and superiour, as servants and masters wee are first to begin with the inferiour, the servant, shewing him his fault, and letting him see his dutie, and then in the second place with the superiour, for so much the fifth Commandement teacheth us. The Lord doth there directly teach the inferiour his dutie, and the superiour by implication: but on that I will not further stand.

Come wee to the speciall dutie here urged, namely, the dutie of wives, that they bee subject to their husbands. In handling this dutie, I will observe this order, keeping as neere as can be within the compasse of the Apostles words.

First, I will shew what this subjection is.

Secondly, wherein it doth consist.

Thirdly, the generalitie of it, touching the persons whom it concernes.

Fourthly, how farre forth it is to bee yeilded, and then after some particular examination (touching the practice of this duty) I will use some motives to stir up (them whom it concernes) to the performance of it.

First therefore know wee, that this subjection is an humble, a readie and willing minde in the wife, yeelding to the government of her husband, as to the ordinance of God: for indeede so hath the Lord ordained, that the wife should bee subject to her husband, Genesis chap. 3. vers. 16. *Thy desire shall bee to thine husband*: and this subjection must bee of an humble and ready minde: our present text makes it cleere, in that the Apostle saith, *Wives submit your selves*, which is as much as if hee had said, Be not constrained to it, but of a readie minde, of your owne accord, even willingly subject your selves to the government of your husbands, acknowledging the ordinance of God, and resting in it: and this also is taught, Ephesians 5. vers. 22. where the Apostle saith, *Wives submit your selves unto your husbands, as unto the Lord*: that is, not as to man, and to the eye outward, or by constraint, but sincerely, and from your hearts as to the Lord himselfe, the husband being in Gods stead: and

verse

Doct. 2.

When we are to informe persons of severall conditions in their duties, wee are rather to begin with the inferiours than the superiours.

The order observed in handling the dutie of wives, which is the third doctrine.

What the wives subjection is.

The subjection
of the wife to
her husband is
in two things,
in reverence
and obedience.

The duty of
subjection in
the wife to her
husband reacheth to all
wives whatsoever
they be.

How far forth
subjection is
to be yeelded
by the wife to
her husband.

verse 24. in that he saith, *Wives are to bee in subjection to their husbands, as the Church is to Christ*, he plainly teacheth that their subjection must be of a readie and willing minde; for the Church, the true spouse of Christ, is subject to Christ willingly, sincerely, and from the heart. Now this humble, readie, and willing subjection of the wife to her husband, doth consist in two things, namely, in reverence, and in obedience: the wives subjection to her husband, must be in a reverent awe of her husband, and in obedience to him: wee finde it so branched out in the Word of God, Ephesians 5. 33. saith the Apostle, *Let the wife see that she feare her husband*: that is, shee must carrie in her minde a reverent opinion of her husband, and in her heart a reverent awe & feare to offend him, acknowledging him as her head, and so her feare towards her husband must not be a slavish feare, but a feare of love, such as is from the body to the head, and from the Church to Christ, even of a loving affection, fearing to offend her husband in any thing, and shewing forth, that her inward loving feare, by outward meeknesse and lowlinesse in her speech, countenance, and all her behaviour towards him.

And againe, her subjection to her husband must be in obedience to him, doing what he gives in charge to be done, and forbearing to doe that hee forbids, wee finde that both these were in Sara towards Abraham, her husband, 1 Pet. 3. 6. *Sara obeyed Abraham, and called him Sir*: the Apostle propounds her example to be followed of all Christian wives: they are to carrie in their hearts a reverent awe of their husbands, shewing it forth in al meeknes of speech and gesture, and they are to yeld obedience to them in word and deed.

Now the extent of the wives subjection, the third thing that I propounded to speake of, is implied in the first words of this verse (*Wives*) in that the Apostle speakes generally and indefinitely, and saith *Wives subject yourselves to your husbands*, he gives us to understand:

That this dutie of subjection is generall and common, and reacheth to all wives, high or low, rich or poore, noble or base, and there is no exemption of any wife whatsoever she be, from this duty of subjection to her husband, though the wife be very wise, and more fit to governe, and the husband of meaner parts and weaker judgement, if hee have any use of reason at all, if hee be not a man franticke or mad, one altogether bereft of the use of reason: if hee be so, then doubtlesse the wife is not bound to subject her selfe to his government, but rather to take on her to be his guide and his governour, for the power of government being taken away, subjection depending on it, ceaseth: but if hee have the use of reason, be it but in a small measure, shee is not exempt from subjection, though she be never so wise: if she be a wife, shee must be subject. Shee must yeeld reverence and obedience to her husband, unlesse she will shake off the yoke the Lord hath laid on her necke, and breske in sunder the cords of Gods holy ordinance.

Concerning the fourth thing, namely, how farre forth subjection is to be yeelded by the wife to her husband, especially in that branch of it, namely, *obedience*, it is laid before us in the last words of this verse (*in the Lord*) considered together with the last words of Ephes. 5. 24. *So let wives be to their husbands in every thing* that generall is here limited: and wee are to understand that, with these words put together thus, that the wife is to be subject and obedient to her husband in every thing in the Lord (that is) in every thing honest and lawfull, in every thing commanded by the husband, not contrary or different from the word of God, the wife is to yeeld obedience: but if husbands command their wives unlawfull things, therein they are not to be subject nor obedient to them: Luke the fourteenth, and twentic sixe, *He that loveth father or mother, or wife or children*: and so of the husband, shee that loves her husband more than Christ, and in obeying her husband disobeyes Christ, is not his disciple: but if the husband

husband command his wife any indifferent or lawfull thing, she is to yeeld obedience without galeasing, though it be never so crosse and contrary to her owne mind: as if her husband say to her, I will not have thee thus or thus attired, but thus or thus (not commanding any new-fangled or whorish attire, but such as is comely) she is to conforme her selfe to his mind; and if he bid her further, go to such a place, whether she may lawfully go (being not to a playhouse or the like) though shee have no minde to goe; or if hee bid her rarry at home when shee shall have a minde to bee abroad, if shee cannot perswade him to the contrary: in these things she is to obey him: for indeed in these things the commandements of the husband have Gods stampe set on them; and if in these things and such like things the wife disobey, she rebels against God himselfe.

Now if wives doe examine themselves by this that hath been said, I feare me most wives will bee found farre short, and much wanting in their duty towards their husbands. To come a little to the triall: dost thou willingly, sincerely, and from thy heart yeeld due reverence to thy husband? Dost thou carry in thy heart a loving awe and feare towards him, as to thy head and governour, set over thee by the Lord, fearing to offend him in any thing, either by speech or gesture? I feare me (if most wives answer these questions truly) their answer must bee negative, and they must needs confesse they doe not. The unreverent behaviour of many wives towards their husbands is too palpable. Are there not some, who care not to shew themselves in the sight of all that looke on them, so farre from yeelding reverence to their husbands, as they sticke not to scoffe and scorne them, to rush and puffe at them, and to cut them up short in words? yea, some there be, who care not to breake out into grosse termes, and bitter words against their husbands: yea (which is most fearefull) sometimes to curse their husbands whom they should reverence and feare.

My husband is a froward frampell man, and he alwaies begins with me.

Be it so, that is his fault, yet that is no excuse for thee, thou art to beare his frowardnesse as thy crosse with patience, and not thereby to bee driven from thine owne duty.

Now for the second branch of subjection (*obedience*) are there not many wives as much wanting in that, as in the former? surely yes, it is too evident: Some there be (who sticke not to utter it) that they will doe this or that; yea, sometimes they binde it with an oath, they will doe it, let their husbands say what they can to the contrary, or they will not doe that hee would have them (being a thing lawfull) though hee would never so faine. To insist in one particular: are there not some wives, who if their husbands bid them leave off this or that apparell, as too fine or costly in the matter, or too garish in the manner, will presently answer him they will not? yea, some are so shamelesse, as to answer in this manner; Let him doe or say what he can, I will have it so. Thus (and many waies besides) wives discover the rebellion of their hearts, in unreverent and undutifull behaviour towards their husbands: yea, they are hardly drawne to this duty of subjection; it is an hard matter to perswade them to it, because the wife is yokefellow with her husband, and neerly knit to him, even one flesh with him; and therefore many wives thinke it unreasonable, and too much laid on them, in that they are enjoyned to be subject to their husbands.

Now then to perswade with them to yeeld to this duty, let them consider only these things.

First, such wives as refuse to subject themselves to their husbands, invert the order of nature; it is as if the body should not bee guided by the head.

Secondly, they breake the ordinance of God; yea a most ancient ordinance of God: for even in mans innocency, before the fall, was woman by Gods ordinance) subject to her husband with pleasure; and if thou be not now subject to thine

Use.

Particular examination of wives touching their duty towards their husbands, and their failings therein discovered.

Object.

Answer.

Four motives to perswade wives to performe their duty to their husbands.

thine husband, thou breakst the cords of Gods ordinance, and pretend what thou wilt, that thou art subject to other superiours and governors: in deed and truth there is no such thing in thee, but an intolerable pride, swelling against all superiority as occasion serves: for how canst thou stoop under other yokes, and yet will not bow downe thy necke to this, of all other the most ancient and the most easie.

Thirdly, consider the Apostles words in this place, that it is a comely thing for the wife to be subject to her husband, and the want of this, or the contrary to it, is an uncomely and unseemly thing. Seest thou a woman not subject to her husband? shee is an uncomely and loathsome creature in the sight of God, though her face be never so faire, her beauty is but as a ring of gold in a swines snout, Prov. 11. 22.

Last of all, the want of subjection in the wife to her husband, is as the want of teaching in a Minister, and the want of justice in a Magistrate, it is a blot and blemish to all her other good qualities and vertues be they never so excellent. Admit she be discrete, chaste, sober, &c. yet if she be not subject to her husband, she causeth the word of God to be evil spoken of, Tit. 2. 5, and that makes all her other good qualities nothing worth; it brings a blot on them all, seemeth never so religious: if she be not subject to her husband, shee hath but a shew of religion without the power of it.

Let all Christian wives thinke on these things: it is not so light a matter as many women thinke, to be unreverent and undutifull towards their husbands, thereby they pervert the order of nature, they violate the ordinance of God, they make themselves odious in the sight of God, they blemish all the good things that are in them: yea, thereby they make it plaine, that their religion is but a shew without substance, it will never yeeld them sound comfort. Be thou therefore thou wife (who soever thou art) stirred up in the feare of God, to yeeld subjection to thy husband; lay aside all reasonings of the flesh to the contrary: labour thou to subdue all thy rebellious thoughts, and never rest til thou be able (with a willing mind) to shew thy selfe reverent towards thine husband, & obedient to him in all lawfull things, and remember who it is that requires this duty at thy hands, even the Lord, who hath made thee of nothing, redeemed thee (if thou belong to him) with the blood of his owne deare Sonne, and preserved thee from thy birth, giving thee food, rayment, and all good things. And let these moove thee to become obedient to his voice: and hee saying to thee, wife submit thy selfe to thine husband: let thine heart answer him, I am comen to doe thy will O Lord: yea, thy Law is within mine heart to doe it: and then doubtlesse thou shalt bee a woman much set by before God, yea, thy husband, the third, verſe the fourth: and many blessings shall come on thee, and overflow thee.

Verſe 19. *Husbands love your wives, and be not bitter unto them.*

In this verſe the Apostle sett before us the duty of husbands towards their wives, namely this, that husbands ought to love their wives, which is set downe by way of exhortation, and that indefinitely, *husbands* (whatsoever ye be) *love your wives*: and this exhortation is further amplified by a dissuasion from the contrary, that husbands should not bee unloving or unkind to their wives: which is expressed under a comparison, the Apostle comparing the kindness of the husband towards his wife, to bitter things: he saith, *be not bitter unto them*, (*Husbands love your wives*) that is, carry in your hearts a kinde and loving affection towards them, and shew it forth both in word and deed, (*and be not bitter unto them*): that is, be not to your wives as bitter things are to the cast, be not unpleasant and harsh in your behaviour towards them; (thine hard

hard and rigourous dealing to your wives, either in word or deed, take heed your love turne not into gall and bitterness towards them.

Now first, let it be here observed of us, that our Apostle having taught wives in the former verse to submit themselves to their husbands; and now coming in this verse to speake to husbands, hee speaks not to them as (it may seeme) he ought to have spoken: for having said, *Wives submit your selves to your husbands*: it may seeme he should heere have said (as most answerable and respondent to his former speech) *Husbands rule over your wives, and exercise your authority over them*: for rule and subjection are correlatives and correspondent one to another, not subjection and love: yet the Apostle thus speaks not, but he (being guided by the Spirit of God) speaks thus: *Husbands love your wives, and be not bitter with them*. He thought it more fit to teach husbands their duty, than to put them in minde of their power, and to let them understand how to use their power over their wives well, and as they ought, than to stirre them up to the exercise of it: he knowing husbands ready enough to use their power and authority over their wives, thought it more meet to informe them how to use it aright, and in holy manner, than to stirre them up to the use of it.

Hereby plainly teaching us thus much, that husbands are especially to looke that they use their power & authority over their wives well, and in a right manner: they are to be most carefull for this, that the rule and government of their wives put into their hands, be used as it ought to bee. It is lawfull indeed for husbands to rule and governe their wives put in subjection unto them; but the practice of that rule and government must bee seasoned with love and sweetness.

And hence it is that howsoever by implication it is cleare from many places of Scripture, that the husband hath power and authority given him over his wife, and he may use it: yet we never finde it directly said, *husbands rule over your wives, or husbands exercise authority over your wives*: but we finde it often said, *Husbands love your wives, and give honour to them as to the weaker vessels*: thereby teaching, and urging the manner of husbands rule and government; and therefore husbands are especially to looke to that: and the reason of it is manifest, namely this:

It is the hardest thing that can be, for a man to carrie himselfe well, and as he ought, in any place of eminency, or in any degree of preferment or superiority. Such is the corruption of our nature, that if a man bee advanced and preferred above others, in any place or degree, his heart is commonly lift up in him, and exalted above measure, and he cannot use his preferment, but with tyranny and domineering over such as are under him. Let a man be preferred, and set in any place of government, though but over his own wife, his own children, his own servants, yea but over bruite beasts; as to be but a sheepe-keeper, and (without the sanctifying grace of Gods Spirit) hee will discover the bitterness of his heart, hee will exercise rigour and tyranny over them: and therefore husbands are especially to looke to this, that their preferment and superiority over their wives, be rightly used, they are to labour to have their hearts sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, that they may use the power and authority over their wives, that is put into their hands, in holy manner as it ought to be used.

And this serves to reprove such husbands as use rigour and tyranny in the rule and government of their wives. Haply some may take occasion through their owne corruption, upon that doctrine touching the subjection of wives, to play the tyrants over their wives, and because wives are to subject themselves to their husbands, and are to yeeld them reverence and obedience: heereupon they may haply thinke, that they may tyrannize over their wives, and carry themselves as Lyons in their owne houses: but let them know (whoever they be)

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Doct. 1.
Husbands are especially to be carefull to use their power and authority over their wives well, and in a right manner.

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Vfe.
Reproofe of such husbands as use rigour and tyranny in the government of their wives.

be) that thinke they may so doe, they discover their owne weaknesse, and their want of right understanding and judgement, and they favour the doctrine of the Apostle to death, and not to life. And now learne (whosoever thou art) that howsoever thy wife is to subject her selfe to thy rule and government; yet thou maist not thereupon take occasion to domineere and tyrannize over her: no, no thou must especially looke to this, that thy superiority and dominion over thy wife be rightly used, labour thou to have thine heart sanctified in thy preferment above thy wife, that it may be used in holy manner, even in love, and that it may be void of all rigour and bitterness; and if it bee not so used, assuredly (without repentance) that preferment of thine shall one day stand in judgement against thee, and shall aggravate and increase thy condemnation.

I come to the duty it selfe here urged by the Apostle, namely this, that husbands are to love their wives.

Touching this duty, I will shew, first, what this love that ought to bee in the husband is. Secondly, wherein it consisteth. Thirdly, the extent of it touching the persons. And fourthly, the measure and condition of it. And then (after these things said a little nearer to our selves) I will use some motives to stir up to the practice of this duty.

First therefore know we, that this love is a chaste affection in the heart of the husband, whereby he is so united and knit to his wife, as he doth rest contented with her, and speaks her good by all good meanes, without subjection, in, and for the Lord: I say a chaste affection, to distinguish it from unchaste love, and wanton lust; for the love of the husband to his wife, must bee as the love of Christ to his Church, Ephes. chap. 5. vers. 25. and Christ his love to his Church is most chaste; that which is added (that this love doth so unite the husband to his wife, as he doth rest contented with her, and seekes her good by all good meanes) wee shall shew that, in expressing wherein it consisteth: but that this must be without subjection, it is cleare; in that the husband is the wifes head, Ephes. chap. 5. vers. 23. and that it must be in the Lord, and for the Lord, that is, so as may stand in feare of God, in obedience to his particular commandement, binding every man to love his wife in speciall manner, we cannot doubt of that.

I come therefore to the second thing, namely, to shew wherein this love consisteth: and there being two especiall parts of the wife, her body, and her soule the husbands love consisteth in them both; and for the husbands love to the body of his wife, that consists in two things; in contentation, and preservation.

The husband must content himselfe with the love of his owne wife onely: we finde that particularly commanded, Prov. 5. 18, 19. *Let thy fountains bee blessed, and rejoyce with the wife of thy youth. Vers. 19. Let her be as the loving Hinde, and pleasant Roe; let her breasts satisfie thee at all times, and delight in her love continually.*

And secondly, the husband must preserve the body of his wife, by cherishing, governing, and defending of her; and these three are so conjoynd and linked one within another, as they are not to bee sundered: for to cherish and not to governe, is foolish cockering; to governe and not to cherish, is austerity; to cherish and governe, and not to defend, is to make the wife no better than a slave, nay worse than a brut beast; for men will cherish, order, and they will also defend and shelter their sheepe, and oxen, from injurie of weather; and shall then any of these things be denied to the wife? No, no, men are to nourish and cherish their wives as their owne flesh, Ephes. 5. 29. They must (as they are able) provide meate, drinke, apparrell, and all things needfull for them; and provision being made, they must so order and dispose all things, as there bee no excessse in any thing, and they must also shield them (as much as they can) from all injurie and wrong, both at home, and abroad.

Now

The order observed in handling the duty of husbands, which is the second doctrine.

What the love of the husband to the wife is.

The love of the husband to his wife stands in love to her body, and love to her soule.

Now; for the husbands love to the soule of his wife, that stands especially in two things.

The first is, that which we are taught, 1. Pet. 3. 7. *That he dwell with his wife as with his owne selfe*: the husband (being the wifes head) ought to be more eminent, and to appeare above her in wisdom, judgement, and discretion, and the feare of God; & (according to his height and measure) in those good things to bend downe, and to apply himselfe, either to implant the same, or to increase them being already implanted in his wife. Husbands sometimes complaine that their wives are unruly, and carry not themselves as they ought towards them, when indeed, the fault is in themselves, because they should dwell with them as men of wisdom, and knowledge, and doe not; it is as if the head (which hath the guiding of the bodie) should leade it thorow briars and thornes, and cause it to be scratched, and then complaine that the armes, or legges, did ake, or smart; for the husband is the wifes head, and should wisely lead her, and go in and out before her.

The second thing wherein stands the husbands love to the soule of his wife is comprised under a generall duty, Philip. 2. 2. the husband is to carrie an equall minde towards his wife, and that is, especially in bearing with her frailties, and infirmities, as with her hastinesse, or slownesse, her importunitie, and such like; The Apostle *Peter* in the place before cited, saith, Let the husband give honour unto the woman as unto the weaker vessell; let him inreat with mildnesse, and gentlenesse, bearing with her naturall weaknesse and infirmities, and if shee fall by occasion into any fault (except Adulterie, which is the bane of wedlocke) let him labour by all kinde and gentle meanes, to reclaim her, considering himselfe, as the Apostle saith, Gal. 6. 1. that hee also may bee tempted, and fall into the like sinne.

For the third thing, the extent of this duty touching the persons whom it concernes, that is implied in the first words of this verse (*Husbands*.) In that the Apostle saith indefinitely, *Husbands love your wives*, not bounding the duty on husbands of this or that order, or condition; hee would have us to understand that this duty is also generall, and reacheth to all husbands, high and low, rich and poore, none exempted, though the husband bee a king, or the greatest man in the earth, if hee bee an husband hee must carrie in his heart a chaste affection toward his wife, he must love both her body and soule, content himselfe with her love onely, cherish, governe, and defend her, dwell with her as a man of knowledge, and beare with her naturall frailties, and infirmities.

Now for the measure of the husbands love, the fourth thing I propounded to speake of, that is taught by the Apostle, Ephes. 5. 33. *Let every one love his wife, even as himselfe*: the husband must love his wife as much as himselfe, and with as hearty and true love, as he doth himselfe: he need not seek farre for a patterne of the love he is to beare to his wife, or a fit example for his imitation; let him but looke into his owne heart, and there hee shall find love to himselfe drawne out into lively red letters, even in his owne blood, and that is the patterne according to which hee must proportion his love to his wife. The Husband must consider what good, hee in his heart wisheth to his owne bodie and soule, and what harme hee labourerth to avoide, and the same good must hee heartily wish to the soule and body of his wife, and the same harme must hee labour to keepe from her. As it is abominable to have two measures in one shoppe, one to buy with, a greater, and anothe to sell withall, and that a lesse, Prov. 20. 16. So is it for a man to have two measures of love to his breast, one a greater, by which he loves himselfe, and another lesse, by which he loves his wife, there must bee the same true measure and condition of love, in the heart of the husband, both towards himselfe, and towards his wife.

Now to lay these things a little nearer to our selves: if husbands try and

The duty of love in the husband to the wife reacheth to all husbands.

The husband must love his wife as much as himselfe, & with as hearty and true love as he loves himselfe.

Particular examination of husbands touching their wives, and their failings in that respect discovered.

3. Motives to perswade husbands to performe their duty to their wives.

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examine themselves by these things delivered. Where is the man that can cleare himselfe, and truly say, hee hath not faild in this dutie towards his wife? No doubt, even they that make conscience of their duty, and endeavour most of all to performe it, must needs confesse, that in something or other they have failed: but (not to speake of them that faile of infirmity, and against their purpose) are there not some who have, and daily doe faile grossely, and please themselves in sinfull failing and declining from their dutie towards their wives? The number of such is too great in the world. Are there not some who carry in their hearts not only a wanton and brutish lust towards their wives, which continueth but for a time, and afterwards turnes as *Amnon* love did, 2. Sam. 13. 15. into extreme hatred? Are there not some, who content not themselves with the love of their owne wives, but follow after strange flesh, and delight to embrace the bosome of a stranger? Is it not too manifest that there be some husbands so farre from cherishing their wives, and providing things needfull for them, as whatsoever they get, they spend in vaine and unthrifty company, in the Ale-house, or the like place, and let wife and children starve at home? And alas, how many husbands be there, that dwell not with their wives as men of knowledge? are not able to governe their wives with any good discretion, but are foolish heads, and cannot goe wisely in and out before them? How many, againe, bee there, that cannot beare with the frailties of their wives, but if the wife be hasty, the husband is as hot; if shee bee rash, he is as heady, and intemperate? And many other wayes doe husbands faile in their duties towards their wives. Well; husbands must be humbled for their failings past, and learne now to make conscience of their duty; carry in thine heart a chaste affection towards thy wife, content thy selfe with her love, cherish, governe, and defend her, as much as thou art able, dwell with her as a man of knowledge, beare with her naturall frailties, and infirmities, and let thy love be as much, and as hearty towards thy wife, as towards thy selfe.

And to helpe thee for ward in this duty, consider:

First, that thy wife is thine owne selfe, Mat. 19. 5. and in loving her, thou lovest thy selfe, Ephes. 5. 28.

And secondly, consider that as the Lord would have the neere union of Christ and his Church, set before us in the conjunction of man and wife in marriage; so he would have the love of Christ to his Church to be represented in the love of the husband to his wife; and therefore if the husband love not his wife, it is, as much as in him is, to denie that Christ loves his Church, and the thought of that is blasphemous.

And further, consider that thy wife is committed to thee in trust, by her parents and friends; yea, shee hath committed her selfe to thee, as a partner with thee, in weale and woe; yea the Lord hath committed her to thee in trust, for her good, and hath given thee power to governe her, and thou must one day, stand before him to give an account how thou hast carried thy self towards her.

If then thou beare any love to thy selfe, if thou wouldest not (as much as in thee is) denie that Christ loves his Church, and so shew that Christ his love hath not yet warmed thine heart: and if thou wouldest not bee found unfaithfull to the Lord, who hath committed thy wife to thee for her good, and is able and will (without repentance) punish thy breach of trust in hell fire, then bee thou stirred up in the feare of God to love thy wife as thy selfe: look what good thou dost wish in thine heart to thy selfe, wish the same to thy wife, dwell with her as a man of knowledge; frame thy selfe to beare with her naturall infirmities, and know withall, thus much, that love in the husband and feare in the wife, are the sinewes of a well ordered house, and they make a sweete harmonie: if love and feare harbour under one roofoe and lodge in one bed, they make a blessed consent, and good agreement: and if love bee wanting in

in the husband, bitterness is the wifes portion, as the Apostle heere saith, and if feare bee wanting in the wife, it were better for the husband to dwell in a corner of the house toppe, than with such a woman in a wide house. Prov. 21: 19. therefore let both husband and wife make conscience of their duties one to another.

There is one thing further to be observed in this verse.

Wee may observe, that the Apostle makes love in the husband to his wife, and unkinde, hard, and rigorous dealing with her opposite and contrary one to another, yea, as contrary as sweet and bitter: hee saith, husbands love your wives, and be not bitter to them.

Whence it is cleare that unkinde and hard dealing with the wife; either in word or deede, cannot stand with that love the Holy Ghost heere requirer of husbands: bitterness and sweetness can never meete together in one and the same subject, no more can hard dealing and love be found in one and the same husband: if the husband be rigorous and bitter to his wife, hee is void of that love and sweetness that ought to bee in him, and therefore it cannot bee, that there is any dramme of true love to the wife in that husband, who is violent and monstrous in his dealing with her, who doth beate and bunch his wife, and with extreame violence mis-use her, that manner of dealing cannot stand with love to the wife: the husband that so deales with his wife is a monster amongst men, and fitter to live in Bedlam than in a civill society: for indeed it is the part of a madde man to strike his owne flesh, as hee doth who strikes his owne wife.

Oh but say some, what if the wife be extremely out of order, and no other meanes will breake her stur stomacke and bring her into order?

I answer thee: Hast thou used all other good meanes, serving to that purpose? hast thou admonished her, sharply reprovved her, as Job did his wife, Job 2: 10. yet so, as thy admonition and reproofe hath been without bitterness and passion, and with a mercifull heart towards her, and so as shee might perceive thou soughtest her good, and not to ease thy selfe on her? hast thou so done? commonly this objection comes from men that never use any other good meanes, but onely in their violent passion of anger (which is a madness for the time) or in their drunken fit strike their wives upon the least occasion, yea, sometimes without any occasion at all: but bee it so, thou hast used all other meanes, yet thou maiest justly doubt, whether striking of thy wife, bee a lawfull and good meanes or no, thou findest no expresse warrant for it in the booke of God, as thou doest for smiting thy childe with the rod, Proverbs 23: 14. and in many other places, and for buffetting of thy servant, 1. Pet. 2: 20. but for striking of thy wife thou hast no such expresse warrant in the word of God: but grant this, that a man may strike his wife, as hee may cut and lance his owne flesh in the time of some great extremity, when no other meanes will serve: hee hath a fore on his arme or legge, that of necessity must bee cut and lanced, and a man in this case may cut and lance his owne flesh, yet bee thou as hardly drawne to strike thy wife, as a man in that case would bee to cut or lance his owne flesh: even in the greatest extremity will a man hardly bee drawne out or lance his owne flesh, not one amongst tenne thousand can finde in his heart to doe it himselfe and with his owne hand, hee will hardly suffer another to doe it, it will grinde and grieve him to suffer it to bee done by another, bee thou as hardly drawne to strike thy wife, may rather forbear to doe it, because thou canst not finde that, as a meanes justified of God, to worke any good upon thy wife; and let all husbands that are bitter to their wives in this kinde, and in their passion doe strike them, know, that they beare no true love to their wives, they are monsters amongst men, yea, they are odious in the sight both of God and men.

Def. 3.

Vnkinde and hard dealing with the wife, either in word or deed, cannot stand with that love that ought to be in the husband to his wife.

Vse.

Reproofe of such husbands as are violent in their dealing with their wives, and doe beate & bunch them.

Quest.

Ans.

No warrant in Scripture for striking of the wife.

Children obedient to the Lord & to the Lord's word.

Ver. 20. *Children obey your parents in the Lord, for that is well pleasing to the Lord.*

THe Apostle doth heere urge upon Children, their speciall dutie towards their parents, and that is obedience: he exhorts them to it, propounding his exhortation indefinitely, in these words, (*Children obey your parents*) then hee sets downe how farre forth they are to obey them (namely) *in the Lord*, and hee doth further strengthen and presse his exhortation by force of argument, taken from the Lords good liking of childrens obedience to their Parents, that such obedience is pleasing, yea, exceeding acceptable, and highly well pleasing unto the Lord, these are the generall things contained in this verie.

Come wee to the words of it, (*Children*) The word children in Scripture hath many acceptions, I will not stand to remember them, here it signifies, such as are children by naturall generation; begotten and borne of naturall Parents, and by (*Parents*) wee are heere to understand Parents by nature, Parents in respect of naturall procreation: (*Obey*) The originall word heere used doth properly signifie to listen or hearken to another, as the inferior doth to the superiour: the meaning is, to bend downe your eares, and incline your hearts, and yeeld unto, and obey the sayings and doings of your Parents, that concerne you, even that which they say or doe to you (*in all things*) Wee are to expound these words by those, Ephesians 6. ver. 1. *Children obey your parents in the Lord*: and so the meaning is in all things honest, lawfull and agreeable to the word of God (*for that is well pleasing to the Lord*) that is, such obedience is exceeding well pleasing, and in high degree acceptable unto the Lord. Thus then conceive wee the Apostles meaning in this verie, as if hee had said: You that are children by naturall generation, bend downe both inwardly and outwardly to yeeld obedience to that which is said or done to you by your naturall parents, and yeeld to them entire obedience, obey them in all things honest and lawfull: for such obedience is exceeding honest and pleasing to the Lord.

Now first of all, the speciall dutie heere urged upon children comes to be considered, and touching that dutie, I will still hold my former method and order in handling of it.

First, I will shew what this obedience here required is.

Secondly, wherein it consisteth.

Thirdly, the extent touching the persons that are to yeeld it.

Fourthly, how farre forth it is to be yeelded by children to their parents, and then after some application of things delivered, I will bring some motives to stirre up children to the practise of it.

First therefore, know that this obedience is a voluntarie and heartie yeelding (so farre forth as children are able) to the voyce and willes of their Parents, a yeelding from the heart willingly (as they are able) to that which is said by Parents to children, and by Parents, willed to be done or suffered of their children: I say a voluntarie and heartie yeelding, for that is the condition of all true, sound, and sincere obedience both to God and man, and so it ought to be qualified: if it be forced, it is no true obedience, it is then but as the obedience of Devils and deprobates, who, will they, nill they, are subject to the will of God, yea both doe and suffer what the divine providence hath appointed, and if it be a yeelding with grudging, murmuring, or the least repining, it is no true obedience: and therefore childrens obedience to their parents must be voluntarie, and heartie yeelding (as they are able) to that which is said and willed by them to be done or suffered of their children.

Interpretation.

Doct. I.
The speciall dutie of children to their parents, is obedience.
The order observed in handling this duty.

Childrens obedience to parents described.

Now this willing and heartie yeelding of children unto the voyce and will of their parents, standeth in two things.

First, in a cheerefull yeelding to that which parents teach, counsell, and command, though the things commanded be never so base or painefull: Prov. 1. 8. *My sonne (saith Salomon) heare thy fathers instruction; and forsake not thy mothers teaching:* and that children are to yeeld to the commandements of their parents, it is cleare from the generall, that *every soule is to bee subject unto the higher powers*, Romans the thirteenth and first: parents have their authoritie from God, and as they are parents they beare Gods image, and their commandements (not contrarying the word of God) carrie the print of Gods commandements.

Secondly, the yeelding of children to their parents stands in a quiet and patient suffering of that which parents inflict and lay upon them in word or deede, bee it admonition, reproofe or correction, yea, though the correction bee without just cause, or more excessive than it ought to be: Proverbs the thirteenth and first, *A wise sonne will obey the instruction of his father: but a scorner will heare no rebuke:* Proverbs 15. verf. 5. *A fool despiseth his fathers instruction: but hee that regardeth correction, is prudent:* Hebrewes the twelfth and ninth, *We have had the fathers of our bodies which corrected us, and we gave them reverence.*

And againe, parents are bound, yea, it is a dutie lying on them to rebuke and correct their children offending, and therefore it is a duty of children to submit themselves to their rebukes and chastisements: that is one part of their obedience.

Now the extent of obedience to parents, touching the persons that are to yeeld it, is implied in the first word (*children*) the Apostle speaking here also without limitation, not saying children that are young, children that are unmarried, or that live in their fathers house: or yee sonnes, or yee daughters, but yee children, indefinitely: hee giveth us to understand that this dutie of obedience to parents, belongs to all children whatsoever, and it is neither age, nor place, nor condition that exempteth sonnes or daughters, from yeelding obedience to their parents.

Here therefore by the way are the Papists justly to bee taxed as the Pharisees were, Matth. chap. 15. verf. 6. they make the commandements of God of no authoritie touching childrens obedience to their parents, by their owne invention: for they hold and teach that in case of vowing, a Maide once out of her nonage, that is (say they) at twelve yeeres old or above, may vow her selfe a Nume: and a young man out of his nonage, likewise (say they) at fourteene yeeres or above, may vow himselfe a Monke, without consent of Parents, yea, directly contrary to the expresse will and commandement of Parents: this is a divellish doctrine, and directly contrary to the expresse commandement of God. A childe, sonne or daughter, is not exempt from obedience to parents at any age: And wee finde it directly said, Numb. 30. 6. that the father may make voide the vow of his childe, though pertaining to Gods worship, much more a vow made without warrant of the Word of God, nothing at all pertaining to his worship, but rather irreligious and tending to the dishonour of God.

Yet here two questions are to bee resolved:

First, whether the sonne being a Magistrate, and the father none, or inferiour unto him, ought to obey his father?

Ans. In things that concerne not that place, the son ought to obey his father.

And againe: In things that may further him in the execution of his office, the sonne is also to obey his father: thus did Moses, Exodus the eighteenth, and twenty fourth verse, the text saith, *hee obeyed the voyce of his father in law,*

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Childrens obedience to their parents, stands in two things.

All children without exception are to yeeld obedience to their parents.

Popish doctrine touching childrens obedience directly contrary to Gods word.

Quest.

Answer.

and did all that he said: but if the father counsell or command any thing against that place and office, then the sonne is not to obey him.

A second question is this, whether a good childe is to obey a wicked father?

Ans. A good childe is to obey a wicked father as he is a father, not as hee is a wicked man and commands wicked things: for a difference is to bee made betweene the office and calling of a father, and the person that beares that office: and a good childe is to obey his wicked father, as hee beares the office of a father, for so he beares the image of God, but not as a wicked person commanding wicked things.

Now the fourth thing propounded to be spoken of, namely, how farre forth obedience is to be yeelded by children to their parents.

That is laid before us in these words (*in all things*) understanding them as before they were expounded, namely, in all things honest and lawfull, and agreeable to the word of God. Children are so farre forth to obey their earthly parents, as may stand with their obedience to God their heavenly Father. If parents would pull their children from God, from his truth, or from their obedience to him, children are then to shake off naturall affection, and (as one saith well) they are to reserve to the Father of Spirits, holinesse and freedom of soule: but if parents command their children things lawfull or indifferent, therein they are (as they are able) to yeeld obedience, though the things commanded bee most painefull: Philip. 2. 8. the Apostle saith, Christ was obedient to his father to the death, yea, to the most painfull and ignominious death of the Crosse.

Now here also comes a question to be answered: It may be demanded, whether a childe that is marriageable, if the father command him or her to marrie, is to obey him?

Parents indeed have power to dispose their children in marriage, and they are not to marrie without their consent: and the father commanding the childe to marrie, the childe is to obey two things concurring with the commandment of the father.

First, if the childe be willing.

Secondly, if the father command the childe onely thus farre (namely) to marrie with a person thus, or thus well qualified, as with one of honest life and conversation, with one of sound religion, as Isaac commanded Jacob, Genesis 28. 1, 2. and not with this, or that particular person, the childe having no minde there to match: if these two things meet with the commandment of the father, then (doubtlesse) the childe is to obey his commandment.

Now if children try themselves by the things delivered, alas how farr: short and defective shall they finde themselves in dutie towards their parents? Where is the childe to bee found, that yeelds to that which is said, or done by his parents willingly? Doe not many children doe that which they are bidden, with a backward looke, with murmuring, whispering, and much repining? Doe not some except against it, as too base, or too painefull? And are there not many children who cleave to their owne will and wisedome, and thinke they know well enough how to carrie themselves, and so despise the counsell of their parents, especially in matters of marriage, and calling, and things of greatest moment? Where is the childe that doth quietly and patiently beare the rebukes and chastisements of his parents? Doe not many children in that respect, even oppose against their parents, and resist them, especially if they be growne to any strength and yeeres? Yea, some thinke that when they are growne to yeeres, when (indeed) they ought to bee most obedient, that then they ought not to bee so much as once rebuked by their parents for any fault, then carnall reason teacheth them to say, they are fooles that will digest reproofes and checkes, and suffer themselves to bee censured, yea they shall have others

to

How far forth children are to obey their parents.

Uti.

Childrens failings in their dutie to their parents discovered.

to put it into their heads, that they are now past children; will you be thus used? will you beare this? Why, you are now 21 yeeres old, you are past a childe: and hereupon many children take heart to themselves to bee stubborn and disobedient to their parents: and many wayes (besides these) doe children shew themselves unpittifull and disobedient to their parents. Well, thou that art a childe, examine thy selfe by that which hath been delivered, and finding thy selfe wanting in obedience to thy parents, be humbled for it; and (now knowing thy duty) leame to make conscience of it.

And that thou mayest be stirred up so to doe, consider these three things.

First, nature it selfe teacheth us, that our parents having taken, and haply still taking, so great paines and cares for us, and having shewed, and still shewing so great love to us, should have this recompence in all honest and lawfull things to be obeyed; and if thou yeeld not obedience unto them, thou goest against the law and light of nature; and canst thou then perswade thy selfe thou standest in grace? that thou hast grace, or standest in the favour of God? Wilt thou say, thou standest in the state of grace, and yet wilt not doe that which nature requires of thee? if thou doe, thou deceivest thy selfe.

Again, disobedience to parents is highly displeasing to God, wee finde an heaue judgement threatned against it. Prov. 30. 17. *The eye that mocketh his Father, and despiseth the instruction of his mother, let the ravens of the valley picke it out, and the young Eagles eat it.* The meaning is, let such an one come to some unimely death, and let his body be cast out unburied, and bee devoured and eaten up of the beasts of the field, and the fowles of the ayre: yea, disobedience to parents, seales up the fearefull wrath and heaue displeasure of God. 1. Sam. 2. 25. the text saith, *Notwithstanding they obeyed not the voyce of their father, because the Lord would slay them:* the Lord was angry with the sonnes of Eli, for their wickednesse, and was purposed to slay them, and in his just judgement he made their disobedience to their father, a punishment of their former finnes, and meanes to bring downe his heaue wrath upon them.

And last of all, consider the Apostles argument, *Obedience to parents is well-pleasing to the Lord:* in obeying thy parents, thou shalt doe a thing not onely pleasing to thy parents, but greatly liked and accepted of the Lord himselfe, and his approbation is better than the approbation of all the world. Thy obedience to thy parents shall be as a comely ornament, Prov. chap. 1. vers. 9. it will grace and beautifie thine heart and life, in such sort, as thou shalt seeme amiable both to God and men. If then thou wouldest not make it cleare (to the discomfort of thine owne soule) that thou art not yet in the state of grace: if thou wouldest not seale it up that the Lord is highly displeased with thee, and hath a purpose to destroy thee; and if on the contrary thou wouldest doe that which is exceeding pleasing to the Lord: then be thou stirred up (of what age or sexe soever thou art) to yeeld obedience to thy parents in all honest and lawfull things; even willingly yeeld thou to that which they say, or doe to thee, and quietly and patiently submit thy selfe to their rebukes, admonitions and chastisements.

Having thus seene the speciall duty heere urged upon children, let us proceed to some other things that yet remaine to bee observed in this verse. And in the next place, it is not to bee passed by (without observation) that the Apostle saith not, Children obey your fathers onely, or children obey your mothers alone; but hee useth a word common to both, and saith, *obey your parents:* as if hee had said, obey both him that hath begotten you, and her that hath borne you.

Wee see then, that obedience is required of children to both their parents: children are to yeeld obedience, both to father and mother. The fifth Commandement expressly saith, *Honour thy father and thy mother.* And Prov. 10. 1.

Three motives to stir up children to yeeld obedience to their parents.

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Doff. 2.

Children are to yeeld obedience both to father and mother.

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Vse.

The wicked-
ness of chil-
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express mention is made of the mother, as well as of the father, *A wise sonne maketh a glad father, but a foolish sonne is an heavynesse to his mother.* So againe, *Prov. 15. 20. A wise sonne rejoiceth the father, but a foolish man despiseth his mother.* We finde it expressly commanded by the Lord, that children should feare both father and mother, *Levit. 19. 3.* Yea, there the mother is put before the father: *Thou shalt feare every man his mother and his father, saith the Lord.* Touching the practice of this duty, wee have an example without all exception, even of Christ himselfe, *Luk. 2. 51.* It is there said, *Hee came downe from Ierusalem to Nazareth, and was subject, or obedient to his father and mother.*

Now this serves to discover the wickednesse and sinne of such children as pretend to yeeld, and haply doe yeeld obedience to their fathers, and yet notwithstanding make small account of their mothers, and lightly regard their commandments, or their chastisements, in word or deede: this is the fault of many gracelesse children, and of sonnes especially; and especially when they begin to grow to yeeres, then (they seeing and noting the mothers infirmities, the weaknesse of their sexe, and how unable they are to punish them for their disobedience, and their inferiour authoritie in the family, and chiefly in this, that they have little or nothing to doe in disposing of lands or goods) they easily grow to some contempt, or at least, neglect of duty and obedience to their mothers. But let all children (that have any care to please God) set against all these things, Gods Commandment, that bindes them to yeeld obedience to their mothers, as well as to their fathers: and know it for a truth, thou dost not yeeld obedience to thy father for conscience towards God, but in some other sinister and by-respect, because hee can reward thy obedience, or punish thy contempt: if thou yeeldst not also to thy mother; and withall remember, that obedience to thy parents (not to thy father alone, or mother alone, but to both father and mother) is the obedience that pleaseth God: if thou thinke to please God by obeying the one, and denying obedience to the other, thou deceivest thy selfe: and if these things move thee not to this duty, yet at least consider with thy selfe the great paines of thy mother, peculiar to her, what it cost her in thy breeding, bearing, and bringing forth; she bare thee in her wombe with much sorrow and griefe, and at last (with great paine and danger) brought thee forth, and being brought forth, her paines and care in tending of thee, farre surpassed the paines and care of thy father, and (it may be) her love was ever greater towards thee, than the love of thy father: and ought not these things to prevaile with thee, to yeeld her reverence and obedience, as well as to thy father? If they doe not, surely it argues, thou art either exceeding blockish and void of understanding, or else altogether unnaturall to thy mother.

Quest.

Now here (haply) it may bee demanded, to which of the parents the childe is most bound? whether the childe bee more bound to the father, or the mother?

Ans.

For answer to this, wee must know, there be three things that a child doth owe to his parents, namely, reverence, obedience, and reliefe and maintenance, if the parents be in want: and the third and last of these, the very light of nature teacheth (and by the way to touch it) If a childe denie to succour and reliefe (according to his power) the poore, old, distressed, and helpelesse father or mother, he is worse than some bruite creatures. It is said of the *Stokes*, that when they are old they keepe the nest continually; and their young birds (by the instinct of nature) provide for them, and feede them till they die. Thinke on this, thou that thinkest thy poore father or mother a burthen and a clog to thee, and thinkest every day a yeere till they be dead; art thou worse than an unreasonable creature? and canst thou then thinke there is any grace in thee? Certainly no, it cannot be that there is any dram of grace in the heart of that child, who denies reliefe to his poore helpelesse parents; yea, who spares it not from his

The unnatu-
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his own belly, and from his own belly, to receive his own old father or mother (but that by the way.

Now the question propounded: That were, that it were equally to be yielded, to the father and to the mother, as they are parents; but if any person of grace or wisdom or virtue be more eminent and appear in the one than in the other; be it in the father, or in the mother, in that respect more honour is there to be yielded. Touching respect and maintenance, that is also equally to be yielded, to the poor father, and to the poor mother; they being both equal, as to be fed at one Table, and no difference to be made between them in that respect: but concerning obedience, because man is the head of the woman, and master of the family; that is rather to be given to the commandment of the father than of the mother, if the father and mother command divers and contrary things.

Some say, whether demand, whether obedience is to be yielded to the father or mother?

Ans. It is, even as to children all parents: we have the example of *Abel*; *Exod. 18. 2.* *Ruth* to *Nahmi*, her mother in law, *Ruth. 3. 5.* Yea, Christ our Saviour was obedient to his supposed father, *Luk. chap. 1. ver. 51.* And the Prophet *Isaiah* chap. 7. ver. 9. reckons it up among the great signs of his time, that the daughter in law rose up against her mother in law; therefore doubtless, children are to yield obedience, not only to their natural parents, but also to their fathers in law, and to their stepmothers.

Observe also further, that the Apostle urging children to yield obedience to their parents, he saith, *Col. 3. 20.* *Obey your Parents in the Lord, for that is well-pleasing to the Lord:* that thing, namely, obedience to parents is well-pleasing to the Lord.

Hence comes a question to be discussed, namely this; whether obedience to parents (yielded by children unbelieving and unregenerate) be well-pleasing to God or no?

To this I answer: Obedience to parents (yielded by children unbelieving and unregenerate) as it is their personall obedience, and considered in the concrete, that is together with their persons, and as coming from them, is not pleasing to God: for as the Apostle saith, *Rom. chap. 8. ver. 8.* *The carnall mind is enmity against God:* and it is a true rule, that the person most displeaseth God, before whose personall actions (as they are his actions) can be pleasing unto him; but as that obedience is an action, and a duty considered in the abstract, that is, by it selfe apart from the person, it is pleasing to God; because it is a thing commanded of God, and simply good in it selfe, in it owne nature, as is hearing of the Word, praying, and such like. As these things (considered in themselves, and by themselves) are good, and pleasing to God; though now as they come from unregenerate and unbelieving persons: so is obedience to parents. Yet know we thus much further, that howsoever obedience to parents (yielded by children unbelieving, and as it is their personall obedience) cannot please God: yet no doubt the Lord (of his exceeding bounty) doth sometimes vouchsafe temporal good things, and blessings, even to such obedience. Such is the rich goodness of our good and gracious God, as of his abundant mercy he doth sometimes give outward blessings, even to the civill obedience and outward good carriage of hypocrites and unbelievers.

Will wee see some examples of it? We know *Isaac* King of *Edom* (a carnall man, hee departed not from the faith of *Isaac* who had beene a true man; yet because hee diligently cultivated the Word, was in the eyes of the Lord in some things; the Lord promised him that his seed should be as numerous as the stars of heaven, and that he should sit on the throne of *Isaac*; *Gen. 26. 3.* *Isaac* King of *Edom* is promised to *Isaac* King of *Edom* (a carnall man) without

Ans.

Quest.

Answer.

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Note.

without question unbelieving) for his service against Tyru. On then the exceeding rich bounty of the Lord our God!

How ought this to stirre up children to yeeld obedience to their parents? that is a thing to which the Lord (no doubt) will sometimes (of his rich bounty) vouchsafe temporall blessings, though it bee performed by children unbelieving. Therefore this ought to stirre up all children to this duty; and if thou bee a childe within Gods covenant, and a true believing member of Christ, let it most of all encourage thee to yeeld obedience to thy Parents; and ever remember thou to thy comfort, that if the Lord carry his eye of bounty towards them that are without, and strangers from his fold; much more will hee (of his rich mercy) reward thee that art one of his owne chosen, and a sheepe of his owne pasture: thinke on it, and remember it.

Consider we yet further, the ground of the Apostles reason in this place: hee saith, *Children obey your parents in the Lord, for that is well pleasing to the Lord*. What is the ground of this? How knew the Apostle that obedience to parents is a thing well-pleasing to God? Surely hee knew it from the Commandement of God, because such obedience is commanded in the fifth Commandement; and hee knew it to bee (in a high degree) well-pleasing to God, because that Commandement is (as the Apostle saith, Ephes. 6. 2.) the first Commandement, namely, of those that concerne our duty to men, and the first Commandement with promise, with a speciall promise annexed to it, *that thy dayes may be prolonged upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*. Hence it was that our Apostle knew this duty of obedience to parents to be well-pleasing, yea, better pleasing to God, than any other duty of the second Table.

And his reason thus considered with these grounds of it, doth afford unto us this conclusion: that Gods good liking of any thing, is to bee gathered from his will revealed: wee must gather the good liking, and approbation of the Lord, that hee likes, and that hee approves this or that thing, from his word.

For indeed, what hee willeth in his Word, that hee liketh, his will there revealed being the rule of all our holinesse and goodnesse: nothing done by us is holy and good, and pleasing to him, but that which hee there willeth. And hence it is that the Apostle puts them together, Rom. 12. 2. *that we may prove what is the good will of God, and acceptable, and perfect*: what God willeth, being good, because hee wills it, and being willed by him, and so good, is also acceptable and pleasing to him. Micah. 6. 6. 7. the Prophet brings in man thus demanding, *Where with shall I come before the Lord, and how shall I bow my self before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, and calves of a years old? will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rammers, or with ten thousand rivers of oyle? shall I give my first borne for my transgression, even the fruit of my body, for the sinne of my soule? will these things please the Lord? And then in the eighth verse the Prophet answeres, Hee hath shewed thee (O man) what is good, and what the Lord requireth of thee, (surely to doe justly, and to love mercy, and to humble thy selfe so, walke with thy God: as if hee had said, that which the Lord hath shewed and revealed to thee to bee good, and that which hee requires of thee in his Word, that is the thing that is pleasing to him.*

Now then, is it so that the Lords good liking and approbation of any thing (and that hee likes this or that, and is pleased with it) is to bee gathered from his will revealed.

I might then apply this to discover the folly of the Papists, who thinke they doe things highly pleasing to God, yea meriting at his hands and deserving heaven, when they doe things that can finde no footing in the Word of God, and are not grounded on any Commandement, or example, or promise in the

Gods good liking of any thing, is to be gathered from his will revealed.

the word of God, but are meere idolatrous and superstitious: but not to spend time in shewing their folly:

Consider we the doctrine as it may concerne us to this purpose: it may serve to guide us that we be not deceived, touching things done pleasing to God: wee are not to conclude things to be pleasing to God from our owne fancy, and our owne opinion, because wee conceive and thinke them to be liked of God, and pleasing unto him, but from the word and promise of God. Many deceive themselves in this respect, they thinke they doe things highly well pleasing to God, and such as hee doth greatly like and approve of, when in deed and truth there is no such matter. For example, doe not many thinke that their true and just dealing with men (their giving every man his own, and the like things done by them) are things exceeding well pleasing to the Lord, though those deedes come not from any sanctified heart, nor from the root of a sound justifying faith, nor yet are done with any regard of Gods glory?

Doe not many thus thinke? it is too evident they doe, and in respect of doing such things, they thinke they are greatly in Gods favour: indeed it cannot be denied but that such things (for the substance of them, and considered in themselves, and by themselves) are grounded on the Commandments of God: but thou must further know, that they must also be done in such manner as the word hath prescribed, they must proceed from faith purging thine heart from the naturall corruption of it, and they must be done in love to God, and with respect of his glory, else it is impossible thou should please God; and therefore doe not thou gather and conclude that God is well pleased with the things thou doest, onely because the things done are good in themselves: if thou doe, thou deceivest thy selfe, thou gatherest Gods acceptance and good liking only from thine owne fancie: and the divell, and thine owne corrupt heart deceive thee, and thus are many thousands deceived. It was *Pauls* case before his conversion: when he was in the worst case, hee thought himselfe in the best, and before he knew the meaning of the Law, he made no doubt but he was alive; but when hee saw the sense and strict justice of the commandment, hee found sinne alive in him, and himselfe dead, *Rom. 7. 9. 10.* And so thousands in the world (being as yet in their naturall corruption) thinke they doe things highly pleasing to God; but alas they deceive themselves: and therefore (if thou tender thine owne good) take thou heed of it; and remember that thou must not onely doe good things, that is, things warranted by the word of God, but in that manner that the word hath prescribed, with an heart purged by faith, with a love to God, and a due respect to his glory, that so thou maist gather Gods good liking and approbation of things done by thee; and if it be otherwise with thee, surely the good things done by thee are hatefull to God, and they bring (in the end) but everlasting death upon thy soule.

Verf. 21. *Fathers provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.*

IN this verse the Apostle (comming particularly to speake to parents touching their duty towards their children) sets downe what hee requires of them by way of prohibition or dehortation: he forbids that, and dehortes them from that wherein commonly parents are faulty, and wherein they (many times) offend; and that is immoderate severity, and rigorous dealing with their children, which is expressed by the effect it commonly workes in children, that it stirres them up to anger; and the Apostle doth direct his dehortation, specially to fathers, and saith, *Fathers provoke not your children to anger*, because if either of the parents offend in rigour towards their children, it is commonly the father: the mother more usually offending on the contrary part, by too much indulgence and tenderneffe; therefore the Apostle saith, *Fathers provoke not your children*

Vse.

A direction touching things done pleasing to God.

children to anger: and this prohibition or dehoration hee doth further streng- then, by an argument taken from the dangerous event of immoderate severity and rigour of parents toward their children, namely, their dejection of minde, their discouragement, *lest* (saith the Apostle) *they bee discouraged*. And so the summe and substance of this verse is a dehoration used to parents, especially to fathers, dissuading them from rigour towards their children, & from hard usage of them for feare of their discouragement.

Interpre-
tation.

By fathers, we are here to understand naturall parents, both fathers and mo- thers, though the Apostle (for the reason before yeelded) doth thus direct his dehoration. The word here rendered [*provoke not to anger*] properly signifies to exasperate, and to stirre up to anger by disgracefull tearmes, and by con- temptuous speeches: But we are to take it in a larger sense and signification, ac- cording to that, Ephes. 6. 4. Where (in our English translation) wee have in effect the same words that here we find; but in the originally, there is a different word used by the Apostle *μεμψίζετε*, a word reaching further, and comprehending more under it, signifying to irritate or stirre up to anger any way; to give children any occasion of anger, and that unjust and sinfull anger, even such as is spoken of Eph. 4. 26. *Let not the sun goe downe upon your wrath*: the word is there also *μεμψίζετε*, that is, unjust and sinfull anger. So then that word in the Ephe- sians, and this considered together, the meaning is; fathers, doe not exasperate and stirre up your children any way, either by word or deed, to unjust and sinfull anger: or rather thus; use so hard and rigorous dealing with your children, whereby they may have occasion to bee stirred up to unjust and sinfull anger, lest they bee discouraged, that is, lest they bee dejected and cast downe in their mindes, and put out of all heart (for so the word signifies) lest they bee put out of all courage and comfort, and even despaire of doing any thing pleasing unto you.

Thus then wee are to conceive the Apostles meaning in the words of this verse: as if he had said, You that are naturall parents, and especially you fathers, doe not you abuse your fatherly authority over your children, doe not you any way exasperate and stirre up your children to anger, use not you any hard and rigorous dealing towards them, whereby they may have occasion to bee stirred up to unjust and sinfull anger; lest, on so doing, your childrens mindes be de- jected in them, and they put cleane out of heart, and lose all courage and comfort, and even despaire of doing any thing pleasing unto you.

I might heere note that of parents, which before wee observed of husbands, vers. 1. 9. that parents also are prone to abuse their authority over their children, and therefore the Apostle thought it most fit to checke that prophannesse, and to warne parents (especially and above all things) to avoid rigour and immoderate severity towards their children. And indeed, it is the common fault of all superiours (if they be not sanctified) to abuse their authority, and to exercise ri- gour and tyranny over such as be under them: but I will not stand on that, ha- ving already handled it.

Note.

Doct. 1.
Parents must
take heed of
rigorous dea-
ling with their
children.
Reason.

Here we may see it plainly laid before us, that parents are not to be rigorous in their dealing with their children, they are not to use any immoderate severity towards them. And this is cleere, both from the text, and that also, Ephes. 6. 4.

The reason and ground of it is also manifest, namely, this extreme rigour, and immoderate severity in any superiour towards the inferiour, is a fault and a sinne: inferiours are to bee held within compasse of their duty and obedi- ence, rather by love than by feare; rather by lenity and mildnesse, than by ri- gour and severity: and if parents be extreme rigorous towards their children, their sinne is greater than the sinne of other hard dealing superiours, because they are more ocerely bound to their children (their children being parts of the- selves, having issued out of their owne loynes) therefore parents ought least of any

any other to bee extremely rigorous, and immoderately severe towards their children: but not to stay in the generall which may haply bee misconceived, know wee that hard and extreme rigorous dealing of parents towards their children, stands chiefly in these three things. Either in commanding their children unjust or unreasonable things, when they (seeing the pliability of their childrens minds) that they are willing and ready to doe any thing at their command, doe lay more on them than is fit, or command them to doe that which is unjust and sinfull. Or secondly, in giving them hard words, rating, reviling, and miscalling them, and reproaching them for every thing that they doe. Or thirdly, in striking or beating them either without just cause, or excessively more than the cause requires, correcting them at their pleasure, saith the Author to the Hebrewes, 12. 10. in their passion and rage many times (as wee use to say) without either time or reason. Parents are not to be extreme rigorous towards their children in any of these three kinds. We have example of all these three in wicked *Saul*, he was a wicked man, and he added this to the measure of his sinne, hee abused his fatherly authority in all these three things. 1 Sam. 20. from vers. 30. to the end of the 33. wee finde that *Saul* in his rage commanded *Jonathan* his sonne a most unjust thing, even to bring *David* to him, that hee might kill him, and what could bee more unjust, that a kinde friend should bring his deare friend, and that an innocent man should deliver another innocent party into the hands of his malicious enemy that meant to shedde his blood? yea hee reviled him verse 30. hee called him the sonne of the wicked and rebellious woman, the sonne of an impudent whore, in plaine termes, bastard, and hee went yet further, verse 33. hee cast a speare at him to hit him, with a purpose to kill him. This manner of rigorous dealing of a wicked and wretched father towards his sonne, hath the Scripture recorded to teach all parents to avoyd the like, and that they seeing the rigorous dealing of a father towards his child pointed out in the booke of God, as one of the great finnes of wicked *Saul*, might take notice of it, that it ought to bee farre from all those that would not bee like so wicked a father: and what Parents soever make any conscience of their duty, ought to bee farre from extreame rigour and immoderate severity, towards their children, either in their commands, or in their reproofes, or their corrections.

Now heerein many parents are faulty: some there bee who are justly to bee taxed, as highly offending in this kinde, who command their children unreasonable things, and things beyond their ability and strength, and if such things bee not done, abridge them of their meate and drinke, and of things needfull: and doe not some Parents loade their children with most odious and fowle names, calling them rogues, and rascals, and filthy carrions, dogges and the like?

Yes, (which is strange) specially in the mother, sometimes calling the child whore-sonne: if the child bee the sonne of an whore, what is then the mother? yet see how some parents, rather than they will want a foule by-name for their child, will not sticke to lay a blot on themselves, and are there not some, who in bearing their children are extremely rigorous, and handle them as if they were no better than dogges? Nay surely, one of tender bowels, would not so use his dogge as some parents in their rage use (or rather abuse) their children: yea I wish there were not some who do vaunt of their rigour and severity, and say they will make them know that they are their parents, these things are too common in the world.

Well, let such as know themselves faultie in these things, bee humbled for that which is past, and henceforth learne to know, that it is a great and grievous sinne in thee (whosoever thou art) to be extremely rigorous and severe in thy dealing with thy children, either in requiring things above the strength

Rigorous dealing of parents with children is in 3. things.

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2

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Vse.

Reproofe of Parents dealing rigorously with their children.

of thy child or in thy censuring of him, either in word or deede, and doe not thou thinke with thy selfe, what skils it, what matter is it if I deale with my child as I list? am not I his father, and must not hee, will hee will hee, bee subject to mee, and to my authority? it is true, indeede thy child is to bee subject to thy power and authority.

Two things
to be conside-
red of Parents
who deale ri-
gorously with
their children.

If thou command him some unjust and unlawfull thing, howsoever thy child is not to obey thee in doing of that, yet if thou adde further rigour, and fall upon him, and beate him for not doing of it, thy child is not to mutter or mur-
mure against thee: and if hee bee stirred up to any impatience, that is his fault, yet thou must know that thy power and authority over thy child is limited al-
so, thou maist not use it after thine owne pleasure, and bee rigorous and out-
ragious in thy dealing with thy child, if thou bee, surely thou art an unnaturall
parent, thou sinnest against the light of nature: even bruit beasts will love their
yonge ones, and use them lovingly, and if nature require this at thy hand,
what then should grace worke in thine heart? Thinke on it, and withall re-
member the Apostles argument in this place: thy hard and injurious
dealing with thy child, will dull and discourage him, it cannot otherwise
choose, because thou art so neerely bound to thy child, and thy child to
thee. When the child shall consider, it is my Father, or my mother, who
should doe mee most good, that deales thus hardly with mee, and doth mee
most ill: Oh, it is a great discouragement to the child, it takes from the child all
courage to any good duty, either in thy service, or in the service of God, and
therefore take heede of it.

Object.

Haply some will say, are not children offending to be censured, and correct-
ed by their parents, and committing some great offence, are they not to be dealt
withall accordingly?

Answer.

It is a fault in
parents to be
too indulgent
to their chil-
dren.

Yes doubtlesse, they are, yet parents are wisely to consider the nature and
qualitie of the childs offence, and to proportion their censure and correction,
as neere as they can, answerable to the same. As it is a fault for parents to be too
rigorous to their children, so on the other side it is also a fault in them to bee
too remisse, and too indulgent, and too much to tender and cocker them, this
was Davids fault, 1 King. 1. 6. the text saith, He would not displease Adoniah
his Sonne from his childhood, to say, why hast thou done so? And this is the
fault of too many parents in these daies, and especially of many foolish mo-
thers, who so dandle their children, and are so vainely pleased with them,
that even their faults also please them; they delight to heare them swear, and to
mis-call others; this is to let loose the reins of fatherly authority, and to lay the
bridle on the neckes of their children, and so doing they make them wanton,
and dissolute persons, and as much as in them is, bring the curse of God upon
their children.

Censure and correction of children is necessary, for as Salomon saith, Pro. 22.
15. Foolishnesse is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive
it away from him: there is a bundle of frowardnesse, stubbornnesse, vanity, and
wickednesse, bound up in the heart of a child; Job 11. 12. A man new borne
is like a wild Asses Colt, but the rod of correction shall drive it away from him.
It is therefore Salomons counsell, Prov. 23. 13, 14. Withhold not correction
from the child, if thou smite him with the rod, he shall not die, thou shalt smite him
with the rod, and shalt deliver his soule from hell. Parents therefore are to correct
their children offending, and if they doe not, they sinne; but they must take heed
their censure and correction bee not extreame, and unmeasurable, they must
looke to the measure of it, that they excoede not measure in it, and that it may
bee such as may profit their children.

3. Rules to be
observed in
correcting of
children.

And to that purpose, these rules are fit to be thought upon and observed.

First, thy child deserving correction, doe not thou flie upon him in a pas-
sion

Now, that be wiſer, more than bruteſt affection, but ſeriously conſider with thy ſelfe, the nature and qualitie of the offence, and how often, or ſeldome thy child hath ſo offended, and accordingly ſet thy correction as ſevere as thou canſt.

Secondly, correct thy child with compaſſion in thine heart, even with yearning bowels in the doing of it: conſider with thy ſelfe, that haply the ſeriousneſſe of curſedneſſe, and particular evil qualitie that is found in thy child, hath beene tranſmitted and conveyed from thee unto him; and thou correcting thy child, doeſt but puniſh thine owne ſinne in thy child; thinke with thy ſelfe, ſhall I thus puniſh mine owne ſinne, and that in my child? Shall I thus proſecute the corruption that I have conveyed unto my child? I ſhall blowe aſſe. A briſt

Thirdly, let the chaſtiſement of thy child be wiſe, lifting up of thine heart to God in prayer, that he would give thee a wiſe heart to give correction, and thy child a ſoft heart to receive it with patience; and to profit by it.

And if theſe rules be obſerved of thee in the correcting of thy child, doubtleſſe thou ſhalt doe it with mildneſſe, and without rigour, and ſhould doe it with profit to thy child, and with comfort to thy ſelfe; yea, thy child in ſuch manner corrected will give pleaſure to thy ſoule. Provs. 10. 17. Hee will utter ſuch gracious ſpeeches, doe ſuch righteous deeds, and have ſuch comely geſtures, and profeſſe ſuch obedience and thankfullneſſe towards thee, ſhall much delight thy ſoule; therefore remember the rules propounded.

Marke we further, the Apoſtles ſhew downe his prohibition in theſe termes: *Provoke not your children to anger.* Where wee ſee, that howſoever, children are not to be provoked to unjuſt anger, and if they bee, they cannot excuſe themſelves, that they are thereunto provoked; yet parents are not to give them occaſion of ſuch anger; parents are not to ſtirre them up to it by their rigorous dealing with them.

Hence we may raiſe this generall truth.

Though no evil ſpring but from an evil root, nor iſſue out, but from an evil fontaine; yet, men are not to provoke and ſtirre up others to evil, nor to give them occaſion to it; for although no man can excuſe himſelfe by ſaying, I was provoked to this or that evil, yet is not he without his ſinne: but many times his ſinne is the greater, as our Saviour ſaid to Pilate, Joh. 8. 12. who hath provoked and ſtirred up another to evil. For that is (indeed) to lay a ſtumbling blocke before another, and a fearefull woe is denounced againſt every one by whom offences come. Mat. 18. 7. Woe be unto the world becauſe of offences, for it muſt needs be that offences ſhall come, but woe be to that man by whom the offence commeth, who gives the occaſion of offence.

This ſerves to diſcover the ſinne of ſuch as uſe to provoke the cholericke to anger, the drunkard to exceſſe in drinking, the contentious perſon to quarrelling, and take pleaſure, and make themſelves ſport in ſtirring up others to ſinne; thou muſt know, whoſoever thou art, that in ſo doing thou makeſt thy ſelfe guilty of great ſinne; for in ſo doing thou ſerveſt the devils trade, thou art his inſtrument; yea thou takeſt on thee the devils trade; and that is the worſt trade in the world; it is his trade and manner to ſpie out to what ſinne men are moſt naturally inclined, and there to aſſaile them; and wilt thou bee like the devill?

Againe, conſider with thy ſelfe, with what conſcience canſt thou be a meanes to draw others into temptation, whereas the Lord requires thee to pray for thy ſelfe and others, *Lead us not into temptation.* And remember thou the puniſhment of the Serpent, Gen. 3. 14. for being an inſtrument of the devill in tempting our firſt parents; if the naturall Serpent was ſo plagued for being an inſtrument of the devill in his temptation, unknowingly, what ſhall become of thee, if thou apply thy wit, thy tongue, and heart to doe him ſervice in this kinde? Surely, as thou art the devils inſtrument, and like him in thy

2

3

Reprooſe of ſuch children as are the devils trade

4

Though every evil ſpring from an evil root, yet men ſinne in provoking others to evil.

Reason.

Reprooſe of ſuch as delight to ſtirre up others to ſinne, and the greatneſſe of that ſinne diſcovered.

thy practice, so thou maist justly looke one day to bee like him in punishment: and if they that turne many to righteousness, shall one day shine as the stars for ever and ever, Dan. 12. 3. Then surely, thou that turnest many from righteousness, and stirrest them up to sinne, shalt bee as blacke as the blacknesse of Hell, and to thee as *Isaie* speaks verse 13. is reserved the blacknesse of darkness for ever. Think on it, and know it is not so small a matter, as it is commonly thought to bee, to make others drunke, or to stir them up to any sinne.

One thing further, may be briefly noted from this verse (namely) this, that the Apostle would not have childrens mindes discouraged, *For hee saith, Let not your children be discouraged, saith the Apostle: he would not have their mindes daunted and cast down in them.*

Hence we are taught, That Parents are chiefly to take heed of doing any thing that may daunt the mindes of their children, and discourage them, and make them that they have no hart to doe good things: they are rather to encourage, and to hearken them to every good inclination in their children, if they discern but any seed of grace or good gift, springing up in their minds or hearts, if they discern any pronenesse in them to religion, any desire after some speciall good calling, as haply to the Ministry, or the like, they are to cherish it, and according to their power, they are to use all good means that it may be increased, at least to water that tender budde with the drops of sweet counsell, and with the word of comfort and encouragement, and to send up to heaven by prayer, that the Lord would warme it by his spirit, and raine downe blessing upon it, that it may grow to some ripenesse.

They are altogether unworthy the name of parents, who grieve at the good graces of their children, and restraints them from all means whereby they might attaine to further increase of them. Good parents, and they that have any soundnesse of grace in their owne hearts, will bee glad and much rejoyce to see the least beginning of grace in their children: they delight to see grace in any other whosoever, but most of all appearing in their owne children; and they will carefully use all good means that serve for the increase of it, and they will even encourage and hearken on their children in every good duty.

Verf. 22. *Servants bee obedient unto them that are your Masters, according to the Lord, in all things, not with eye-service, as men please, but in singleness of heart, fearing God.*

THe Apostle having laid downe the speciall duties of those in the family, who are more neerely ryed one to another: Now hee comes to the duties of such as are lesse bound one to another, (namely) to the duties of *Masters and Servants*, and following his former order, hee begins with the duties of servants and conditions of servants, being harder than any other, he sets downe their duties in more words than any of the rest.

First exhorting to it in the 22. and 23. verses, and then strengthening his exhortation by force of argument, verf. 24. 25.

In this 22. verf. we have two things in generall laid before us.

First, the duty of servants generally propounded by way of exhortation in these words. *Servants bee obedient unto them that are your Masters according to the Lord, in all things*, and then the manner of their obedience in the words following, *Not with eye-service, as men please, but in singleness of heart, fearing God.* Touching the exhortation to the duty more particularly, the Apostle doth first propound it, and exhorts to it indefinitely, *Servants bee obedient to your Masters*, and then he amplifies his exhortation both by describing their masters, that they

Doff. 3.
Parents must take great heed of doing any thing that may daunt the minds of their children and discourage them from good things.

Vse.
Reprooffe of such parents as grieve at the graces of their children.

Note.

they are their masters according to the flesh, and by setting downe how farre forth obedience is to bee yeelded unto them, namely, in all things: *Servants be obedient to them that are your Masters according to the flesh, in all things.*

Let us first examine the words of this exhortation touching the sense and meaning of them.

(*Servants*) In the time of the Apostle, when hee writ this Epistle, such were properly called (*Servants*) as were taken in warre, and kept in bondage; or such as were bought with money, and indeede slaves to their Masters: but wee are to take the word in a larger sense, for servants of any sort whatsoever, even such as our servants are, who serve for wages, or as apprentices (*be obedient*) The originall word here used, is the same we had ver. 20. and the meaning is the same. Servants listen and hearken to your masters, and yeeld to them, and obey them in that they say, or doe to you (*according to the flesh*) These words have relation to the word (*Masters*) Masters according to the flesh: and the meaning is, to your Masters who have power onely over your bodies, and not over your soules and consciences (*in all things*) that is, in all things your masters say, or doe to you, being things honest and lawfull: for so much is implied in that masters have power onely over the bodies of their servants, and not over their soules, so as if the master command his servant any thing against the libertie of a good conscience, he is not therein to be obeyed.

Thus then wee are to conceive the meaning of these words, as if the Apostle had said: You that are servants of any sort whatsoever, doe you yeeld to that which is said, or done to you by your Masters, who have power over your bodies, but not over your soules and consciences, yeeld to them entire obedience, obey them in all things, honest and lawfull.

Now here, first, the speciall durie of obedience (due from servants to their masters) comes to be considered: and touching that, I will shew first what that obedience is.

Secondly, wherein it consisteth.

Thirdly, the persons whom it concerneth.

And fourthly, how far forth it is to bee yeelded by servants to their masters; then after some particular examination, I will adde some motives to stirre up servants to this durie.

First therefore know, that this obedience is a willing, and cheerefull yeelding of servants to the voyce and will of their masters, even a cheerefull yeelding to that which is said to them of their masters, and willed by their masters to bee done or suffered of them.

And this willing and cheerefull yeelding of servants to the voyce and will of their masters stands in two things.

First, in a cheerefull doing of things commanded by their masters, though the things commanded, bee never so base, or never so laborious and painefull: Luk. 17. 7. Christ sets downe this cleerely, when hee saith, *Which of you is it that having a servant plowing, or feeding cattell, would say unto him by and by, when he were come from the field, goe, and sit downe at the table: as if he had said, If a servant that hath been toyling all the day long in following the plow, or the like labour, at night when hee comes home wearie and hungrie, be commanded by his master a further service, he is not to refuse to doe it, hee is still to doe what his master commands him.*

Secondly, the yeelding of a servant to the will of his master is in a meeke and patient bearing of that rebuke, or correction that is laid on him by his master, yea, though the correction bee without just cause, or unreasonable, and more excessive than it ought to be. 1 Pet. 2. 18. *Servants (saith the Apostle) be subject to your masters with all feare, not onely to the good and courteous, but also to the froward, even to such as are froward, crabbed, and perverse, and wrongfully buffet*

Interpre-
tation.

Def. 1.
Servants are bound to yeeld obedience to their masters. The order observed in handling that obedience: What the obedience of servants to their masters is.

Servants obedience to their masters is in two things.

2.

buffet you: for so it followes, verſ. 20. 21. *For what praise is it if ye be beaten for your faultes, ye take it patiently? but and if ye doe well, ye suffer wrong and take it patiently, this is acceptable to God.*

Servants are in silence to suffer the checks and rebukes of their masters, not answering againe, as it is Tit. 2. 9. not muttering or murmuring, nor giving one word for another: and they are patiently to beare that correction that is laid on them by their masters, though it be unjust or excessive: and therefore say not thou, being a servant, when thou art unjustly corrected, I deserve not to be so roughly dealt withall, but remember thou deservest more at Gods hand for some other sinne, and the hand of thy master is but the instrument of God, for the punishment or correction of that other sinne which is in thee.

Now for the persons whom this dutie concerns, that is laid downe in the first word (*Servants*) the Apostle here also not limiting this dutie to servants, of this or that sort, but saying indefinitely (*Servants*) wee are given to understand that the duty belongs to all servants, whether they be bound to their masters, or serve for wages, or howsoever: say not thou, I am but a journeyman, or I am but hired for a day, or my master is my brother, my uncle, or my kinsman, and therefore I am not bound to such dutie and obedience as others, no, no, remember that *Jacob* served his uncle *Laban*, Genesis the twelfth nine. If thou be a servant, to whomsoever, or for how long, or how short a time, thou art bound to yeeld obedience to him that is thy master, both willingly doing what he commands thee, and patiently suffering what becometh thee, either in word or deed.

For the fourth thing, how farre forth this dutie is to be yeelded by servants to their masters, that is expressed in these words (*in all things*) thou art a servant, thou must yeeld obedience to thy master not in some things, such as are most easie, or doe best agree with thine owne fancie, doing what likes thee, but thou art to doe what things soever pleaseth thy master, Tit. 2. 9. what hee will have thee doe, being not contrary to the word of God, being things honest and lawfull: indeed if thy master command thee to lye, to sweare, or the like, thou art not therein to yeeld to his commandement, but in all indifferent and lawfull things, obedience must be yeelded by the servant to his master.

Now if servants trie themselves by that which hath beene delivered, out of question most servants will finde themselves farre short of that dutie they owe to their masters.

It is a generall complaint that servants were never worse than now in these dayes, and indeede scarce one servant of a thousand makes conscience of that obedience that is due to his master. Where is (almost) the servant to be found that yeelds willing and cheerefull obedience to the voice and will of his Master, or Mistresse, or Dame, for the word (*Masters*) is to be understood of both? Where is that servant that willingly doth that which is commanded by his Master, or Mistresse, or Dame, and with meeknesse and patience beares that rebuke or correction they lay on him or her? Nay, doe not many servants, being bidden doe one thing doe another, and even what they list themselves? and if they be rebuked, are they not ready to repel? doe they not answer againe, and give one hard word for another? are they not sometimes as loud as their masters? and if they be corrected, doe they not many times take the staffe by the end, and resist? yea, doe they not sometimes curse their Master, or Mistresse, or Dame, and with a plague or mischief to light on him, or her, or on the hand that strikes them? those things and many others of like sort, are too common with servants, and are matters of full complaint in the mouches of most governours of families.

Well, let all servants now call themselves to a strict account, and examine themselves touching this dutie of obedience towards their masters by that which

The dutie of obedience to masters concerns all servants whatsoever they be.

A servant must obey his master in all things honest and lawfull.

Use.
Triall of servants touching their dutie of obedience to their masters and their failing therein, discovered.

which hath been said, and finding that thou hast heretofore failed, be humbled for thy failing: thy disobedience to thy master is one of thy great finnes, and till thou be humbled for that, thou hast no true repentance.

Therefore this day before to morrow be humbled for that, and learne hence, for ward to make conscience of yeelding due obedience to thy master.

And to helpe thee forward, consider with mee that so long as thou art disobedient to thy master, thou canst doe no good dutie of Gods worship either pleasing to God, or with comfort to thine own soule: thou canst not pray with comfort, heare the Word, or receive the Sacraments with comfort: for why? thou livest in a manifest breach of Gods commandement, yea, thou causest his name to be evilspoken of, 1 Timoth. 6. 1. how then canst thou doe anything either pleasing to God, or comfortable to thine owne conscience? it is not possible.

Againe, consider that thy master is but thy master according to the flesh, hee hath power onely over thy bodie, but there is a master in heaven who hath power over both bodie and soule, and if thou pull thy necke from under the yoke of thy earthly master, and refuse to yeeld obedience to him in thy bodie, haply becaule hee is an hard master, know that so doing thou bringest both thy bodie and soule under the yoke of Gods wrath, who hath power to destroy them both eternally in hell fire: be therefore better advised, and if thou desire to doe duties of Gods worship, pleasing to God, and with comfort to thy selfe, if thou wouldest not, by easing thy selfe (as thou thinkest) by withdrawing thy necke from under the yoke of thy earthly master (who can onely deale hardly with thy body) bring thy selfe under the heave yoke of the wrath of God, who can and will (without thy true repentance) destroy both bodie and soule in the fire of hell; then in the feare of God, bee thou stirred up to yeeld willing and cheerefull obedience to thy master, doe that thou art commanded, bee it never so base or laborious, being a thing lawfull, and suffer with meeknesse and patience that rebuke and correction that is laid on thee by thy master: and if thy master correct thee unjustly, consider thou, that it is the Lords will thou shouldst be under so sharpe a master, and hee calls thee to suffer a little for his sake, who gave his owne Sonne to suffer so much for thee, if thou belong to Christ: therefore submit thy selfe and beare it quietly, and lay aside all reasonings of the flesh that rise up to the contrary.

As haply thou wilt say, I could bee content to beare rebukes and correction too at the hands of my master, if he were a man of any account or reckoning in the world, were hee a Magistrate, or a Minister, or some other man, but alas my master is a poore silly man, one of the poorest in the place where hee dwells, and therefore I cannot so well digest his rebukes, and so patiently take correction at his hand.

Take thou heed of this kinde of reasoning, this comes from the suggestion of Satan, and from thine owne corruption: and know it for a truth, that bee thy master never so poore, hee hath as much authoritie over thee, as the greatest man hath over his servant: his povertie doth nothing detract from his authoritie over thee, neither ought it to lessen thine obedience to him: and therefore make conscience of it to yeeld obedience to thy master, bee hee never so poore, or of never so meane condition in the world. And so much of the speciall dutie of servants here laid before us.

One thing yet remaines to be observed in these words, namely, the description of masters; they are masters according to the flesh, that is such as have full power onely over the bodies, and not over the soules of their servants: there is then matter of comfort for servants that are under hard and cruell masters: thy cruell master is but master over thy bodie, hee can but exercise his crueltie over that, hee can never hurt thy soule, and hee can use his power over

Two motives to stirre up servants to yeeld obedience to their masters.

I

Comfort for servants that are under cruel masters.

over thee but during the time of this fraile and mortall life: in the grave the servant is free from his master, Job 3. 19.

Yea, if thou be a servant fearing God, and thy master a carnall man, here is comfort for thee, thy master hath onely power over thy body: the chiefe part, thy soule and conscience are free, yea, freer than the soule of thy master, for hee is a servant to sinne, but thou art the Lords free-man. 1 Cor. 7. 23. But the point especially here offered is this.

That the master hath not authoritie over the soule and conscience of his servant, hee hath not power to impose any new thing on his soule and conscience, any thing not warranted by the word of God: no, the master is not to command the body of his servant so as may hinder the liberty of a good conscience, as to command his servant to attend him at a Masse, or some idolatrous service, if the master so command the servant, hee is not to obey him, as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 7. vers. 23. *Iee are bought with a price: bee not the servants of men*: the Apostle (here simply forbids not service to men) for that were to contradict him selfe in other places) but service and obedience to men in things not commanded by God, nor warranted in the word of God, a subjection of our wills in the case of religion to the will and pleasure of men: it is therefore a prophane speech to say, I will be of what religion my master will have mee, if hee will have me to be a Protestant, I will be one; if a Papist, so I will be, that is to subject thy soule to thy master: whereas indeed, he is but master over thy body, thy master according to the flesh.

Indeed, saith the Papist, (here hee takes hold) secular masters and secular governors, be it Prince, or whosoever, they have nothing to doe in matter of religion to impose any new thing on their inferiours, they are but masters according to the flesh: but the Pope and his clergie, being spirituall masters, masters in spirituall things, they may impose what they thinke meete on their inferiours.

I answer them in a word, it is a meere device of their owne braine, to make a distinction of masters according to the flesh, and spirituall masters: wee finde no such distinction of masters in the word of God: the Apostle addes this note of difference (*masters according to the flesh*) to distinguish earthly masters, from our one onely master in heaven, Christ Iesus, the onely master of his Church, the house of God, and therefore this is but a popish fancie, that some are secular masters, and some are spirituall masters, and that they may impose on their inferiours what they thinke meete, this cannot stand with the truth of the word of God.

Come wee to the second generall laid downe in this verse, namely, the manner of obedience due from servants to their masters, in these words (*not with eye service, as men pleasers: but in singlenesse of heart fearing God*) Wee see here the Apostle sets downe both what manner of obedience servants ought to yeeld to their masters, and the contrarie to it, commanding the one, and forbidding the other: and hee begins with the contrarie, which hee calles eye-service, and tels servants they are not to obey their masters with eye-service: and lest his speech should bee mistaken and misconstrued in forbidding eye-service, he further shewes what manner of eye-service hee forbids, namely, such as commonly comes from men-pleasers, from such as onely seeke to please men.

Not with eye service (saith the Apostle) *as men pleasers*: and then hee comes to the right manner of obedience that servants are to yeeld to their masters, shewing that it ought to bee contrarie to that eye-service, even single or simple hearted obedience, even such service as is done in singlenesse and simplicitie of heart: and hee doth further discover the roote of that, whence such single hearted service springeth, namely from the feare of God. *But in singlenesse*

Note.

servant of
the Lord
of the
household

Dost. 2.

Masters have
not authoritie
over the soules
and consciences
of their servants
to impose any thing
upon them not
warranted by
the word of
God.

Vse.

Reproofe of
such servants
as pin their religion
on their
masters sleeve.
A Popish objection.

Answer.

Comfort for
servants
of the Lord
of the household

single-ness of heart fearing God: and that is the generall resolution of the second part of this verse, setting downe the manner of obedience that servants owe to their masters.

Let us cleare the words touching the true sence and meaning of them [*with eye-service*] the originall word is in the plurall number, (not with eye-services) the meaning is, not with duties of obedience performed to the eye, not doing the duties and things commanded by your masters, onely in the sight and presence of your masters, onely when they are present and looke on you, or may come to the knowledge of that you doe, and if they turne their backs, or the things you doe shall never come to their knowledge, or at least you so imagine, then you either sit idle, or slack your labour, or doe worse, as men-pleasers, that is, as those who only care to satisfie men, and to give them contentment for the time, and have no further respect [*but in single-ness and simplicity of heart*] (for so is the word). The single or simple heart in Scripture, is usually opposed to a double, hypocritically and deceitfull heart, and by it is meant a sound, honest, and sincere heart: and the meaning of the Apostle is this: But doing service to your Masters, in the simplicity and truth of your hearts, without any manner of fraud or dissembling, even from the sincerity of your hearts, yeelding to your masters sound, true, and faithfull service [*fearing God*] that is, carrying in your hearts (as the ground of such sincere and faithfull service) a reverent awe and holy feare of the great and glorious Majesty of God, even out of a holy love to him, in regard of his mercy, and of a reverent love of him, in respect of his judgements, and fearing to offend him in any thing.

Thus then conceive we these words [*not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in single-ness of heart fearing God*] as if the Apostle had more largely spoken thus: Not doing the duties and things commanded by your masters, onely when your masters are present, and looke on you, or may come to the knowledge of that you doe, at other times being idle or remisse, in your businesse, or doing amisse, as those who only care to please men, and to give them contentment and looke no further: but doe you (even from the sincerity of your hearts) yeeld to your masters, sound, true and faithfull obedience and service, ever carrying in your hearts a reverent awe, and holy feare of God, even of a true love to him for his mercy, and of a reverent awe of him in respect of his judgements fearing to offend him in any thing.

Now first from these words (expressing the manner of that obedience and service that is due from servants to their masters) servants are further taught,

That they must not onely yeeld obedience to their masters, and doe them service; but they must doe it in such manner as it ought to be done: and in speciall, their obedience and service must be qualified, as the Apostle hath here expressed, it must not be eye-service, obedience to the eye of the masters, but single-hearted service and sincere, coming from the feare of God. Servants must yeeld to their masters true and faithfull obedience, they must doe them service truly and faithfully, as well in the absence of their masters, as in their presence, as well when their Masters cannot look on them, or haply take account of their service, being employed in other affaires farre distant from them, as when their masters stand over them, and behold every thing they doe.

Sincerity and faithfulness is required of servants in doing service to their masters, in all places, and at all times of employment, in any businesse of their masters. And further to prove this, besides the evidence of this text, reade Tit. 2. 10. The Apostle there requires it in plaine termes, that servants shew all good faithfulness to their masters, that they shew their sincerity of heart in all things, for that (as I take it) is the meaning of the Apostle, when he saith [*good faithfulness*] as if he had said, servants shew forth sound and sincere faithfulness in all your obedience, and in all your services done to your masters,

Interpretation.

eye-service
not in single-
ness of heart
fearing God

Do. 3.

Sincerity and faithfulness is required of servants in doing service to their masters in all places, and at all times and in every businesse of their masters.

The things
wherein the
faithfull ser-
vice of servants
consisteth.

not to spend time in prating the generall, but rather to make it manifest in the speciall branches of it: we must know there be two things wherein that true and faithfull service that servants are to yeeld to their masters, especially consisteth, namely in diligence, and in a care of their masters good.

Servants are to yeeld faithfull obedience to their masters.

First, in a diligent performance of their businesse they are to be about by their masters, as well in their absence as in their presence, not idling, and loytering, and trifling out the time when their masters eye is from them; but at all times, doing that businesse whereabout they are employed, with the uttermost strength of their minde and body, or both, according to the quality of the businesse.

And secondly, in a care of their masters good and profit, and his lawfull advantage, not pilfering any of the benefit of their labours to their owne use, without the consent of their masters, not riotously and wastfully mispending their masters meate, drinke, or any of his goods, but being as careful and as thrifty for their masters and their families, as they would bee for themselves and their families, and that also as well in the absence as in the presence of their masters.

Will we see some examples of true and faithfull service in both these kinds? Look upon *Ioseph*, Gen. 39. hee (no doubt) was diligent in the workes of his masters service; as we may gather by the Lords blessing on his labours: hee was also careful of his masters goods; in so much as the text saith, ver. 6. that his master left all that he had in *Iosephs* hand, and took account of nothing that was with him; and ver. 8. that his master knew not what hee had in the house with him, but committed all that he had to his hand.

But most excellent and memorable (in this kinde) is the example of *Jacob*, Genes. chap. 31. vers. 38, to the end of the 40. verse: *This twenty years (saith Jacob) have I been with thee, yhus was and thy goats have not eaten their young, and the rammes of the flocke have I not eaten. Ver. 39. whatsoever was mine of beasts, I brought it in to thee; but made it good my selfe, of mine hand and did not requite it; were it stolen by day, or stolen by night. There was his faithfull care for the goods of his master; he was so farre from pilfering any thing from his master, as he made good that which was lost; and for his paines and diligence, hee saith, That hee was in the day consumed with heat, and with frost in the night, and his sleep departed from him. Here is indeed an example of single-hearted, and faithfull service yeelded by a servant to his master. Let all servants looke on this example, and consider it, and if they duly consider it, and thereby examine their owne practise, no doubt it will convince most servants of unfaithfullnesse towards their masters.*

If most of our servants compare their manner of service done to their masters, with this right line of true service, it will discover the wickednesse of their hearts, and they must needs acknowledge they swerve farre from the right manner of service they ought to yeeld to their masters. Doe not many servants (in their masters presence) seeme to be very diligent and painefull, yet careful too for the good of their masters, and that their worke may be for his best advantage, and every way seeme to yeeld him true and faithfull service; but if once he turne his backe to them, then they loyter and trifle out the time, and care not which end goes forward? yea, (if they can hide their negligence and fraud) though it be by a lie, as *Gabriel* did, 2. King. 5. 25. they care not if it be the complaint of many masters, and no doubt a just complaint, that their servants will doe little or nothing, longer than they looke upon them: yea, that some of their servants (if they looke not narrowly onto them) will be sliching, and steale from them, and convert their goods to their owne use, or wastfully mispend them. Is not this the manner of service that many servants yeeld to their masters?

Use.

The unfaith-
fulnesse of ser-
vants in doing
service to their
masters disco-
vered.

Let us consider
the unfaithful-
nesse of servants
in doing service
to their masters
discovered. Let
us consider the
unfaithfulnesse
of servants in
doing service to
their masters
discovered.

sters? Surely if they deale truly with themselves, they must needs confesse it to be so. Well, know it thou servant, whosoever thou art, that this manner of service is but eye-service; this is not single, but double-hearted and hypocriticall service: thou playest the hypocrite with thy master, and will the Lord suffer thee to goe unpunished? No, no, assure thy selfe the Lord doth hate and abhor hypocrisie in every thing. Thou mayst haply please thy selfe, and give ease to thy selfe in thy negligence and idlenesse, or in thy pilfering, and drawing things from thy master to thy selfe, but withall thou bringest woe to thy conscience, and the curse of God on thine owne soule: yea, so long as thou art a servant onely to the eye of thy master, and art unfaithfull in his service, thou eatest not thine owne bread, thou livest cheevishly, though thou steale none of thy masters goods; and being idle, and in his absence neglecting his businesse, thou stealest away thy labour from him which is as due to thy master, as any of his goods: and therefore let every servant bee admonished (in the feare of God, to take heed of yeelding onely eye-service to his master; and if thou wouldest not be guilty of hypocrisie and theft (two foule finnes bringing fearefull judgements) be thou stirred up, even in singlenesse of heart, to doe service to thy master, truly and faithfully: be as diligent and painefull in thy masters businesse, and as carefull of his lawfull profit, and best advantage, in his absence, as in his presence, and as well when hee is many miles from thee, as when hee is present and lookes on thee: and take heed of the sin of wicked Ziba, 2. Sam. 16. 3. he was very unfaithfull to his master: consider his example, and learne to avoide his sinne.

Observe we in the next place that the Apostle makes an opposition betweene eye-service pleasing to men, and singlenesse of heart.

Whence it is cleare, that a servant may doe service contenting the eye of his master, and pleasing to him, and yet with a double and deceitfull heart; and though the master be a continuall beholder of the conversation of his servant, and his eye alwaies on his service, yet hee is not every way a competent judge of his good or ill service; for his servant may doe service to his eye, and pleasing to him, and yet carry in his breast a dissembling heart.

Yea the point is generall. A man may doe good duties contenting the eye of man, and pleasing to man, and yet with a double and hypocriticall heart.

Our Saviour shewes it plainly, *Matth. 6.* That men may fast, and pray, &c. and in so doing, please men, and get their applause, and commendation, and yet bee hypocrites, and doe those things not in truth and sincerity of heart, but in meere hypocrisie, and with double hearts.

And the reason of it is cleare, namely this, Nature can put on the counterfeite and semblance of grace, and make that seeme to men a gracious worke which is done, without any dramme of sanctifying grace in the heart.

This must teach us not to content our selves with the good liking and approbation of men, touching any good duty done by us, we are not to thinke we doe good duties as we ought, because the things done are glorious in the eyes of men, and men like and approve of them: no, no, wee must gage our owne hearts in the doing of good duties, and looke that they be done of us in singlenesse and sincerity of heart: wee may seeme to doe many good things before men, which men may applaud and highly approve, and we may bee thought petty Angels, and (as it were) dropt out of heaven, and yet be empoysoned at our hearts with vaine-glory, and hypocrisie, and the like; and therefore thinke not, thou dost good duties as they ought to bee done, unlesse thine owne conscience (being instructed by the word of God) beare thee witnesse thou dost them in singlenesse and sincerity of thine heart: ever look to that in the doing

Note.

Dost. 4.

A man may doe good duties, so as men cannot except against them, and yet with a double and hypocriticall heart.

Reason.

Vse.

We must not rest in the good liking of men touching good duties done by us, but labour to approve our hearts to the Lord in the doing of them.

doing of good duties; and assure thy selfe, if thine owne conscience witness against thee in the doing of any good duty, that thou dost it in hypocrisie, or with desire of vaine glory, though all the world commend thee for it, yet the Lord hath no delight in thee; and if thine owne heart condemne thee, as *Iohn* saith, 1 Epist. 3. 20. God is greater than thine heart, and much more will hee condemne thee, and therefore it concernes thee to looke to thine owne heart, and to the sincerity and uprightnesse of it in doing of every good duty.

Marke we further, the Apostle saith not onely, *with eye-service*, but addes to it (*as men-pleasers.*)

Quest.

Hence a question may be moved, namely this, whether it bee utterly unlawfull to please men?

Ans.

Ans. No, the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 10. 33. that hee pleased all men in all things, not seeking his owne profit, but the profit of many, that they might be saved. And Rom. 15. 1. it is his precept, *Let every man please his neighbour in that which is good to edification*: and therefore it is not simply unlawfull to please men.

How it is lawfull to please men, and how it is not.

But that we may understand how it is lawfull to please men, and how it is not: know we it is not lawfull to please men in sinne, and in evill things; and againe, it is not lawfull to please men in good things, resting onely in the pleasing of them, and contenting our selves only in their good liking, but it is lawfull to please men in good things, and for their good: so did the Apostle in the places before cited; and in his precept, he saith, *Let every man please his neighbour in that which is good to edification*: and againe, it is lawfull to please men in good things, so as wee rest not in the pleasing of them, but aime also (and that chiefly) at the pleasing of God.

The last thing offered unto us in this verse, is from the last words of it (*fearing God*), where the Apostle making the feare of God the root of single hearted service, understand we thus much.

Doct. 5.

The good and faithfull service that servants doe to their masters, comes from the feare of God.

Use 1

If thou wouldest be a faithfull servant, get Gods feare into thine heart.

Use 2.

If thou wouldest have a faithfull servant, get one truly fearing God.

That all good and faithfull service done by servants to their masters, comes from the true feare of God, that is the root and fountaine of it: it was the feare of God that made *Iacob* and *Ioseph* so faithfull in doing service to their masters.

And indeed, where the feare of God is truly grafted in the heart, it will cause men to make conscience of every sinne; and where that is wanting (as *Abraham* concluded, Gen. 20. 11.) there no conscience is made of the greatest sinne.

Wouldst thou then bee an obedient servant, yeelding service to thy master in singlenesse of thine heart? then endeavour thou to have thine heart seasoned with Gods grace and feare.

And againe for masters: dost thou desire a faithfull servant? then seeke out such an one as feares God, *David* professed he would seeke such an one, Psalm. 101. 6. *Mine eyes shall bee unto the faithfull of the land, that they may dwell with me; hee that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me*; and if thou wouldest have servants (that are under thee) true and faithfull; then endeavour thou, and use all good meanes to worke the feare of God in their hearts: they are justly plagued with bad servants, that care not whether their servants bee religious or no; no more than for their oxe or horse: so that (like one of them) they be able and willing to doe their worke. It is the complaint of men sometimes (such an one is a very good servant for paines taking) hee will worke hard, but hee is nimble fingred, he will bee pilfering now and then: now, heere is the cause of it, hee wants the feare of God, he is unfaithfull to God, how then can he be faithfull to men?

Labour therefore to plant the feare of God in thy servant, and then doubtlesse hee will doe thee true and faithfull service: yea, then the blessing of God will bee upon his service, and haply on all thou hast for his sake, as it is said,

Genl.

Genes 39.4.5. The Lord blessed the Egyptians house for *Josephs* sake; God-
liness is gainfull even in servants, and therefore bring thy servant to the hea-
ring of the word preached; examine him afterwards, instruct him, and give him
good example; and by all other good meanes, draw him to feare God, and tho-
row Gods blessing, that being once wrought in the heart, thou shalt have him
a good and faithfull servant.

Ver. 23. And when ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord
and not unto man.

THe duty of Servants towards their Masters being very hard, and withall
no lesse needfull for servants to performe, the Apostle dwells somewhat
longer on it, than on the duty of any other particular condition of life.
Here therefore in this 23. verse, hee still goes on in his exhortation to the
duty of servants, and doth further lay before them this generall, reaching to all
their actions and businesses done in the service of their masters, that whatsoever
they doe therein, they should doe it heartily, and then hee shewes them the
meanes, how they may come to doe so, (namely) by doing it as to the Lord,
and not unto men, as if hee had said: I exhort you to doe what action or busi-
ness soever you doe in the service of your masters heartily, and would you
know how you may so doe? Heere is the way, whatsoever yee performe in
the service of your masters, doe it as a debt and service to the Lord and not
unto men.

(Whatsoever ye doe) (that is) what thing, action, worke, or businesse soever ye doe in the service of your masters, for the Apostle here speaks of the works of servants, as they are servants, and those are the workers of their Masters; and that his meaning is so, the word following makes it cleare *heartily*, worke it, so the word properly signifies (*heartily*) the originall word signifies, from the very soule, the meaning is, doe it from the heart with good will, so doth the Apostle expound himselfe, Ephes. chap. 6. vers. 7. doing the will of God from the heart (saith hee) vers. 6. and then vers. 7. With good will serving the Lord and not men, so the one doth expound the other; (*as to the Lord and not unto men*) For the understanding of these words, wee must know, that every Master, as hee is a Master, hath his authoritie from God, Romans 13. 1. And hee beares the Image of God in his authoritie, and power over his servants; and it is the will of God, that the Master should bee over his servant, and command him; and that the servant, should be under his Master, and bee commanded by him, and obey him. And so the commandment of the Master (not contrary to the word of God) carries the stampe of Gods commandment, and the servant in obeying that, obeyes the will of the Lord. These things rightly understood, will help us to the understanding of these words, (*as to the Lord, and not unto men*) and shew that they are thus to bee conceived; as therein principally serving the Lord, and not men: or thus, as therein doing service, not simply and barely to men alone, but in them to the Lord, and therein obeying his will. The Master, as he is a Master, bearing the Image of God, and standing in the Lords stead (his commandment being not contrarie to the word of God) beareth the stampe of Gods commandment.

- Come we to the matter of instruction, hence offered : and first here wee see, that servants are further taught.

That they must doe all their workes, in the service of their masters, from the heart willingly: whatsoever they doe in the service of their Masters, be it great or small, be it pleasing, or displeasing to themselves, they must doe it from their very heart and soule.

Howsoever the servants shal bee free, and the Master hath not power over

Ddd

it :

Interpre-
tation.

Servants must
do the works
of their
Masters, from
their hearts
willingly.

Vse 1.
Servants are
to examine
their hearts
in doing the
works of their
masters.

Vse 2.
Good duties
done unwillingly
yeeld
no comfort to
the doer.

Dolbrs.
Servants must
discerne Gods
image in their

it: Yet the beginning of all good service, from servants to their Masters, is in the heart and soule: and from thence it must come, and this is not onely cleare from this text, but also from that Eph. 6.6. Where the Apostle saith to servants: be obedient to your Masters, not as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.

And the reason and ground of this, is that generall truth, that it is no true service or obedience either to God or men, that is not willingly performed: there is a needfull worke of the heart and soule in every service and dutie done, whether to God or men: and if the dutie done, bee either forced or done with a grudging heart, it is no sound part of obedience, and therefore let all servants examine and take account of their owne hearts, in doing the workes of their masters service, and looke thou doe every worke (thou art set about by thy master) willingly, and from thy very heart and soule, and lay aside all grudging and repining, to common a thing with many servants, especially if the worke be any whit laborious and wearisome: then many servants goe about it with an ill will, and with a secret repining in their hearts, and as wee use to say, as if they had neither life nor soule. Take thou heed of this, and know that howsoever thy worke so done may bring profit and benefit to thy master, and thou maist thinke that sufficient (as some sticke not to say, have I not done your worke, and what would you have more?) yet indeed that is not enough, if so bee thou desire comfort in thy doing of service to thy master: howsoever I say, thy deed done may bring profit to thy master, yet being done unwillingly, it will never bring comfort to thine owne soule: thy worke done unwillingly, is no more pleasing to God than the deed of thy masters horse or oxe. And the application of this may bee generall: if wee doe any good worke or dutie (be it in the immediate worship of God) unwillingly, or after the manner of leaden, heavie-hearted and drowfie professors, surely, there is no comfort to bee found in the doing of it: for indeed it is not the doing, but the readie and cheerefull doing of Gods will, that pleaseth him (which wee daily pray for) he lookes rather to the heart, and to the motion and affection of the heart in doing any thing than to the thing it selfe, yet so as the thing done bee agreeable to his will, and a good duty commanded in his word. If any superstitious thing bee done, it is not pleasing to him, though it bee done from the very heart and soule, and with the greatest good intention, and with the greatest devotion that may be: the Lord then regards not the heart and motion of it, but in doing of any good duty, hee rather lookes to the heart, and to the affection of the doer, than to the thing done: and onely that good duty is pleasing to him which is done heartily, even from the very heart and soule, 1. Corin. chap. 9. vers. 17. And therefore take heede thou bee not possessed with a spirit of slumber in doing of any good thing: that is the character and badge of a carnall and drowfie professour, but labour thou to have thy heart quickned by grace, that whatsoever good thing thou doest either in the immediate worship of God, or to thy brethren, thou maist doe it with alacrity and chearefulness and from the very heart root, as the Apostle speaks Philippians the first and the eight, for that is only pleasing to God.

The next thing that comes to bee considered is this, the Apostle having said to servants, whatsoever yee doe in the service of your masters doe it heartily, hee addes further (as the meanes whereby they may come to doe so) this consideration, that in doing service to their masters, they do it not barely to men alone, but in them to the Lord (their masters (as they are masters) bearing the image of God, and standing in his stead.)

Hence servants are taught: That they must discern the image of God in their masters, that they may doe willing and hearty service vnto them: they must consider that their masters are in Gods roome to them, and stand in Christ his stead,

head, as his vicegerents in the familie, and they commanding any lawfull thing, it is Christ that commands it.

Hence it is that the Apostle doth exhort servants, Ephes. 6. 5. 6. to be obedient to their masters as unto Christ, and as the servants of Christ. But here haply some may say: are wicked and ungodly men, unbelievers and such as are not members of Christ (being masters) in Christ his stead to their servants? can they that are not members of Christ be in the stead of Christ?

Yea, even they as well as other masters, who are Godly, religious, and the members of Christ. For we must know that masters stand in the stead of Christ, and beare the image of God, not as they are good or bad, or thus or thus qualified, but as they are masters, and have power and authoritie over their servants, for so they are designed of the Lord to that office, and have their power from him, and it is his will and ordinance, that they should be above their servants in place and authoritie, and that their servants should be under and in subjection to them: therefore every master howsoever qualified, yea as hee is a master, be beares the image of God, and stands in Christ his stead to his servant. 2. Tim. 6. 10. saith the Apostle, let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not evil spoken of: the Apostle there speaks to servants that had Infidels and unbelieving masters, as may appeare by that hee addes ver. 20. *And they which have believing masters, &c.* thereby implying that before, hee spake to such as had unbelieving masters, and yet hee would have them that had such masters, not to cast off all regard of them, because they were Infidels, but to discern in them the image of God, and as they were masters, that they stood in Christ his stead, and so to yeeld them reverence and obedience: and thus ought all servants to do, they must discern the image of God in their masters, such as their masters are in Christ his stead to them, as the ground of all due reverence, and of all hearty obedience to their masters, and therefore though thou art a servant, look not thou so much on the outward habit or condition of thy master, nor yet on his qualities good or bad, (though I confesse good things in the master, as holy knowledge and the feare of God appearing in him, to be loved and revered) but yet as thou art his servant, looke not so much at them as at the image of God in his authoritie and power over thee, discern then that, and let thine eye be ever upon that, and that no doubt will be a means to make thee doe (whatsoever thou dost in thy masters service) heartily, and willingly, and from thy very heart and soule, as to the Lord himselfe, and not to thy master alone. Many servants carrie themselves rudely and unrespectfully to ward their masters, as if they were their companions rather than their superiours, not shewing any token of subjection, nor standing bare to their masters, nor bowing unto them, nor rising up before them, yea even in the publique assembly many of them stand cheek by cheek with their masters, with their hats on their heads, which is unrespectfull behaviour in an high degree.

Now here is the cause of it, they discern not the image of God in their masters, they look only at the outward appearance of them, which be either good and meane. Indeed if rich masters, or masters of great place in the world, did beare the image of God, and poore masters the image of an Angel, or some inner creature, it were something: but thou must know that thy master (be he never so poore or meane) (as he is a master) beares the image of God, as well as the richest master in the world.

Againe, many servants (haply) doe that which they are commanded by their masters, but if the thing commanded (a little) offend their humour, and displease them, they do it unwardly, and with very ill will, and what is the cause of this? whence comes this? Surely from hence: they discern not the image of God in their master, they consider not this master commanding them

Masters that they may serve them willingly and heartily.

Every
that every
may be
willing
and
heartily
to do
what
the Lord
commandeth
in their
conscience.

Now

Vfo. 1.

Reprooe of such servants as discern not God's image in their masters, and therefore do not willingly and heartily serve them.

Yam yam
yam yam
yam yam
yam yam
yam yam

Vse 2.

That every one may yeeld willing subjection and hearty obedience to his superiours, he must discern Gods image in their authority.

Notes.

them any lawfull thing, it is the Lord Iesus in them that commandeth it: wouldst thou goe untowardly, and with ill will about thy business? If the Lord Iesus (that hath redeemed thy soule from hell (if thou belong to him) and shall one day come with glory to judge the world) were in thy masters place and stead, and did command thee to doe it? Oh no, thou wilt say, I would be most ready and willing to doe any thing, were it never so hard that he should command me: why then consider that thy master stands in the roome of Christ Iesus, and thy master commanding any lawfull thing, it is hee that commandeth it in thy master, and if this be duly thought on, and settled in thy minde, no doubt it will make thee do whatsoeuer thou dost in the service of thy master, willingly and heartily, yea, that every one of us may yeeld willing subjection and hearty obedience to our superiours, wee must discern the image of God in them, and consider that they have their authoritie and power over us from the Lord, and as they are our governours, do stand in the Lords stead to us. Thus did David discern in wicked Saul when he called him the Lord annoyed, 1 Sam. 26. 19. and this indeed is the ground of all willing and hearty subjection of any inferior to his superiour. Then wee shall willingly and heartily doe whatsoeuer lawfull thing is enjoyned by our superiours, when we have an eye to the image of God in them, and looking on them as standing in Gods stead; and that this obedience and subjection wee yeeld to them, is yeelded not to men alone, but (in them) to the Lord: yea, (to reach out this a little further) there is never a one of us but we are bound to doe service one to another, in duties of love and mercy, as occasion is offered.

Now then consider we, that in doing duties of love & mercy to our brethren, wee doe them not to men alone, but in them to the Lord Iesus, so himselfe saith plainly, Matth. chap. 23. 40. and that will make us doe them, heartily and willingly.

What is the pull-backer? what commonly maketh men unwilling to doe good duties of love and mercy to their brethren? surely they looke only at the outward habit or quality of the person, and their owne flesh teaching them up and down within themselves, what? shall I bee serviceable to such a base fellow, to one so foolish, so meane, and so ill deserving of men? These are the thoughts and reasonings suggested by the flesh, and that thou must bee able to quell and overcome them: learne then to looke thorow them, and to espie under the base and meane condition of thy brother, a more excellent person and that is doing a duty of love, and merke so thy brother, thou dost it not to him alone, but in him to the Lord Iesus. If men did duly consider this, that it is the Lord Iesus, to whom they doe duties of love and mercy in their brethren, would it not put a new spirit into them, and make them doe them willingly and cheerfully? you doubt it would, and ever will, in all that have any true feeling of the comforts in Christ.

And therefore ever consider thou, to whom the duty of love and mercy is principally done, even to the Lord Iesus in thy brother, and that will make thee doe it heartily and from thy very soule, as to the Lord, and not to man alone.

Now we come to the next thing, the Apostle saith to servants: whatsoever ye doe in the service of your masters, doe that as to the Lord.

Here it is cleare that the meanest thing a servant doth in the service of his master is a service done unto the Lord: a servant in doing the meanest service to his master, serves the Lord, as the Apostle saith plainly in the next verse, for ye serve the Lord Christ. Here is a picture of great comfort for servants imployed in meane offices under their masters: but thou imployed in thy masters kitchen, as a Kitchen-boy or maid: dost thou sweepe the house, wipe the oyle, or performe any meane office, in the service of thy master? remember thou to thy comfort

The meanest thing a servant doth in the service of his master is a service done unto the Lord.

Vse.

Comfort for servants that

comfort, that in so doing thou servest the Lord, and know that the Lord hath put thee in that office, and submit thy selfe to his will, and serve thy master in it chearefully, and with good conscience, and then though thy imployment and service bee base in the eye of the world, yet it is not base in the sight of God, he esteemes it, as good service done to himselfe, hee regards it, and will one day in mercie reward it, and thinke on this to thy comfort.

are employed
in meane offi-
ces under
their masters.

Verf. 24. *Knowing that of the Lord yee shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.*

IN this verse the Apostle comes to strengthen his exhortation touching the dutie of servants before delivered, and to presse servants to the practice of it by force of argument, and to that purpose he here useth an argument taken from the rich reward, as it were the wages and hire thereof, which is no lesse than the inheritance of eternall life, which true beleiving servants shall receive at the hands of the Lord: as if he had said, be encouraged, yeeld obedience to your masters, and serve them in singlenesse of heart, and whatsoever ye doe in their service, doe it heartily, for of the Lord yee shall receive the reward of the inheritance: and this argument the Apostle doth further amplifie, first, by their owne certaine knowledge and assurance of it, that they shall receive such a reward, knowing (saith he) that ye shall receive it. And secondly, by a reason why they are to looke for so great reward at the hands of God; because that in serving their masters, they serve their Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ, and he takes their service as done to himselfe, and therefore hee (doubtlesse) will pay them their reward, and give them that reward that hee hath promised to all his faithfull servants. And so wee see the generall things that are contained in this verse.

Interpre-
tation.

(*Knowing*) that is, not by guesse or conjecture, but certainly, *Knowing*, you doing your duty being assured of it, your knowledge being grounded on the promise of God, who is faithfull and just to performe it (*the reward of the inheritance*) that is eternall life and salvation in Gods kingdome of glory.

Now that is called both a reward and an inheritance.

First, a reward, both by way of similitude, because it is given as wages is wont to be given to workemen, and labourers at the end of their labours, when their worke is finished, then commonly they receive their hire and wages; so when Gods children have finished their course, and passed thorow the labours and miseries of this life, they receive eternall life. Whence it is that the Apostle *Peter*. 1. Epist. 1.9. saith; They receive the end of their faith, even the salvation of their soules. And in this similitude, and resemblance is eternall life a reward: and also, because being promised by God to his children, it is duly and justly rendred to them upon his promise.

And secondly, eternall life is cald an inheritance, because it belongs, and is, and shall bee given to Gods children, even to such as are his adopted children in Christ, who having received the adoption of sons, are the heires of God through Christ, as wee have it, Gal. 4. 7. and as the Apostle saith, Rom. 8. 17. being children are also heires, even the heires of God, and heires annexed with Christ, yea joynt heires with Christ the naturall Son of God, of whose bodie they are members, and so are heires of salvation, as it is Heb. 1. 14. and life eternall is their proper inheritance, and therefore so called in this, and in many other places of Scripture. (*For you serve the Lord Christ*) that is, in serving of your masters, you serve not them alone, but in them the Lord Christ (your masters standing in his stead) and the Lord Iesus Christ takes your service as done to himselfe: thus then we are to conceive the meaning of the Apostle in the words of this verse, as if he had said,

You servants doe as faithfull and heartie service to your masters, as you would doe to the Lord, certainly knowing and being assured of it, that you (doing your dutie) when you have gone through the labours of this life, of the Lord ye shall receive eternall life, and salvation in his kingdome of glorie, as the promised reward due to all his faithfull servants, which is an inheritance that he will bestow on you as on his adopted children in Christ: for in serving of your masters, you serve the Lord Iesus Christ, and hee takes your service as done to himselfe.

First, we are here to marke, that the Apostle doth encourage servants to bee obedient to their masters, and to serve them in singlenesse of heart, doing every thing in the service of them, as to the Lord, by an argument from the rich reward of their service, that of the Lord they shall receive no lesse than the reward of eternall life.

Hence then wee may conclude, that servants in doing service to their masters, may have an eye to the reward of eternall life; the Apostle setting in this place before them, as an encouragement, that they shall receive the reward of eternall inheritance; they (doubtlesse) may looke up to it, and have respect to it in doing good service to their masters.

And this is grounded upon that generall, that in doing good duties, men of any calling or condition may lawfully have respect to the recompence of eternall reward, as it is expressly said that *Moses* had, Heb. chap. 11. vers. 26. And hence it is that eternall life is proposed and set before us in the Scriptures, as a price, and as a garland, or crowne, 1. Cor. 9. 24. 25. And being so resembled, men may have an eye to it in the performance of good duties: yet so as they do not good duties only, or principally in respect of that reward. We are chiefly to respect Gods glorie and the discharge of our dutie in doing of good duties, and then secondarily, wee may minde and respect the recompence of eternall life.

And therefore thus may servants doe, in doing service to their masters: in doing of it, they are principally to minde Gods glorie, and the discharge of a good conscience in doing their dutie, and yet therein also may they have an eye to the promised reward of eternall life and salvation.

And this being so, servants are (indeed) in doing service to their masters, to have an eye to that great reward of eternall life, laid up and provided for all those that keepe faith and good conscience in doing the duties that concerne them: they are to looke up to that, and ever to fixe the eyes of their mindes on it, and that (no doubt) will further and encourage them to doe true and faithfull service to their masters; and whatsoever they doe in their service, to doe it heartily as to the Lord.

Servants are often times discouraged from doing such service as is required at their hands, for the smalnesse and slenderesse of their wages and reward: and though haply they receive as much as was covenanted and agreed upon, betwixt them and their masters, yet because it is but little, or they thinke it too little, therefore they take libertie to themselves to neglect their dutie, and to doe but little, and sticke not to say (as the common saying is) if you will mend my wages, I will mend my pace, or to say, What if the service I doe bee not altogether such as it ought to be, yet it is answerable to the wages I receive: such servants as thus speake, and doe, they shew plainly they looke onely to the hand of man, and no higher, and in so doing, they deale most foolishly: for they looking onely to the reward they receive from men, and doing service (as they thinke) answerable therunto, what doe they but even deprive themselves of that rich reward, good and faithfull servants shall receive at the hands of the Lord? in comparison whereof, all that servants doe, or can receive from man, bee it a thousand pound a day, is not to be

Dott. 1.

Servants may have an eye to the reward of eternall life in doing service to their masters.

Use.

Servants are to have an eye to the great reward of eternall life for their encouragement in doing service to their masters.

be esteemed worth a rush; and therefore looke not thou to the slender-
ness of the wages thou receivest of thy master; but let thine eye bee ever on
the greatnesse of that reward that is yet behinde, no lesse than a kingdome, Mat.
25. 34. and no lesse than the riches of thy heavenly master, verl. 22. A reward
infinitely surpassing any service thou art able to performe, and that (no doubt)
will make thee lay aside all reasonings of the flesh; as that thy wages are but
slender; or thy master is a man, either not deserving a good servant, or without
conscience to reward him, and the like, and it will make thee true and faithfull
in the service of thy master, and to doe whatsoever thou dost in his service heart-
ily and cheerefully, because thou lookest further than the hand of thy master,
and seest a rich and incomparable reward reserved for thee in a better hand,
even in the hand of him who is able, and will also in his good time bestow it on
thee: Ever look thou up to that rich reward that is laid up in heaven for a good
and faithfull servants, and consider thou that the Lord of his mercy will crowne
thy poore service done to thy master, with no lesse than a kingdome, and with
the joyes of his owne everlasting kingdome: and (without question) the consi-
deration of that, will cause thee to passe through all difficulties suggested by
thine owne flesh, and will encourage thee to serve thy master in singleness of
heart, doing whatsoever thou dost in his service, heartily and cheerefully.

In the next place we are to marke the Apostles first amplification of his ar-
gument in the words of this verse: [*knowing*] He saith not barely, for of the Lord
ye shall receive the reward of inheritance, but knowing it, you beleeving ser-
vants doing your duty as you ought, in your place and calling, being there-
by assured of it, that of the Lord yee shall receive the reward of the inheri-
tance.

Hence we may raise this conclusion, that doing of the duty that ought to bee
done in any place or calling faithfully, and with good conscience, it gives assu-
rance to beleevers that they shall be partakers of eternall life.

The Apostle here saith to beleeving servants, Bee obedient to your masters,
doe you your dutie as you ought, certainly knowing, that so doing, yee shall re-
ceive the reward of the inheritance of the Lord.

Thereupon we may gather, that by faithfull and conscionable doing of that
dutie that ought to be done in any particular place or calling, true beleevers may
certainly know, and be assured, that of the Lord they shall receive the reward
of eternall life: and this doth the Apostle further shew in his owne example
most plainly, 2. Tim. 4. where he saith to *Timothy*, verl. 5. Doe the worke of an
Evangelist, make thy ministry fully knowne: then hee addes verl. 6. for I am
now ready to be offered, and the time of my departing is at hand: as if hee had
said, Doe thou *Timothy* that which becomes thee in thy place and calling:
faithfully and with conscience, for I have so done in my place and calling; I
have finished my course, I have kept the faith, and done my duty faithfully and
conscionably, and stood against all opposition to the contrary, and now I am
ready to be offered and to depart this life: and then mark what he is bold here-
upon to inferre and affirme, verl. 8. *Henceforth* (saith he) *is laid up for mee the*
crowne of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give mee at that
day: as if he had said, I have finished my course, and done my dutie in my place
and calling; and hereby I know, and am assured, that henceforth is laid up for
me a crowne of righteousness.

A plaine prooffe of this, that by faithfull and conscionable doing of thy dutie
that ought to be done in any particular place and calling, true beleevers may be
assured that the reward of eternall life belongs unto them, and that they in time
shall receive it.

And the reason and ground of this is, because true beleevers are not onely
assured by the infallible testimonie of the Spirit of God, after an unspeakable
manner

Conscience
shall be
the reward
of inheritance
which the Lord
the righteous
judge shall give
me at that day

Doct. 2.
Faithfull and
conscionable
doing of du-
ties that ought
to be done,
doth assure
beleevers of
eternall life.

Reason.

manner bearing witness with their spirits that they are the children of God, Rom. 8. 16. and so, as children, have right to the eternall inheritance in heaven, but they are also assured of it by the fruits of the Spirit. 1. Ioh. chap. 3. vers. 14. *We know we are translated from death unto life, because we love the brethren.* Love of the brethren (a fruit of the Spirit) gives assurance of translation from death to life, that men are set out of the state of nature which is deadly, and are now in the state of grace.

Now love to our brethren shewes it selfe, and is manifested in doing good to them, as in the generall calling, as we are Christians, so in our particular place and calling, in family, Church, or Common-wealth. When we (in that particular place and calling) doe the best good we can to our brethren, wee manifest our true love to them, which is a fruit of the Spirit: and therefore hereupon it must needs follow, that by faithfull and conscionable doing of the duty that concernes true beleevers in their particular place and calling, by doing it in singleness of heart, in obedience to the Commandement of God, with a sincere respect to Gods glory, and the good of their brethren, they may come to certaine knowledge and assurance, that of the Lord they shall receive the reward of eternall life. And this being a cleere point,

Use 1.

Confutation
of that popish
doctrine, that
men in this life
can only have
a good hope,
and no certain
assurance of
their salvation

First, it meets with that desperate and divellish doctrine of the Papists, who teach their followers ever to stand in doubt of their owne salvation, and tell them they can never come to any certaine knowledge and assurance, but at the best, may onely have a good hope of it; whereas indeed a good and sound hope (such as the Apostle speakes of, Rom. 5. 5. that makes not ashamed) ever comes from faith: and faith is a certain perswasion resting on the free grace and promise of God, and so they confound themselves in their owne speech: but being pressed with this and the like places [knowing that of the Lord yee shall receive the reward of inheritance, and wee know wee are translated from death unto life, because we love the brethren.]

A popish cavill
confuted.

What is their answer? forsooth [*knowing*] here, and in such like places (say they) signifies a knowledge by signe and by conjecture, and not a certaine knowledge; which is a meere shift: for the word is the same with that, 1. Ioh. 5. 20. where Iohn saith, *We know that the Sonne of God is come.* Now (I hope) they will not say that our knowledge of Christ his incarnation, and coming in the flesh, is a knowledge by guesse and by conjecture, but a certaine knowledge; they will say they know and beleeve it certainly. Now the originall word there, is the same with this here; and therefore (as well in this, as in that place) it signifies a certaine knowledge.

Obiect.

Oh but saith the Papist, we cannot have certaine knowledge that the reward of eternall life belongs to us, by doing the good duties the Lord requires of us, because we may (perhaps) not have done them so well as wee ought; wee are fraile creatures, and we may have failed in the manner of doing them; and therefore thereupon we can have no certaine knowledge.

Answer.

Indeed if our knowledge and assurance of the reward of eternall life were built on the perfection of good duties done by us, we could never have any certaine knowledge of it; but true beleevers doing good duties (in singleness and sincerity of heart, in obedience to the Commandement of God, therein seeking Gods glory, and the good of their brethren) are thereby assured that the promised reward belongs to them, their assurance not resting on the dignitie or perfection of their workes, but on Gods free and gracious promise, who hath freely promised in Christ to reward the poore endeavours and service of his children, with the reward of eternall life: and therefore this still remains a truth, that true beleevers (by faithful and conscionable doing the duties that concerne them in their particular place and calling) may come to certaine knowledge, that the reward of eternall life belongs to them.

And

And let this be laid up in the hearts of all true believers, as a ground of excellent comfort; it is not a doctrine of presumption (as the Papists take it) but of great comfort and encouragement, even to heaven up to the doing of every good duty. Indeed if it were uncertaine (happly we might obtaine the crowne, and happily misse of it) we should have no heart to seeke after it: but now since it is so, that we (believing in Christ, and doing good duties faithfully, and with conscience) may thereby come to a certaine knowledge that we shall obtaine it, it is a notable comfort and encouragement to us. And let all servants therefore (to them is their encouragement here particularly intended) let them (I say) and all others of what calling or condition soever they bee, consider how they wrong themselves in the neglect or careless doing of good duties that concern them, they thereby deprive themselves of sweet comfort. Art thou a true believer? and dost thou perswade thy selfe that thou dost truly believe in Christ? doe then the duties that concerne thee in thy place and calling faithfully, and with a good conscience, and thou shalt thereby make knowne unto thy selfe and others, that thy faith is no fancy, and seale up to thy soule a sweet comfort, that the promised reward of eternall life belongs to thee: thou shalt not serve God in vaine, as the wicked thinke, and speake, Malach. 3. 14. True believers serve not the Lord for naught: no, no, of the Lord they shall receive a rich reward. As the wicked (heaping sinne upon sinne) treasure up wrath upon wrath, Roman. chap. 2. ver. 5. so true believers doing one good dutie after another, lay up treasure for themselves in heaven, Matth. chap. 6. ver. 10. every one degree of glorie upon another. And therefore let us be stirred up with faithfulness, and good conscience, to doe the duties that concerne us in our particular places and callings, as the Apostle exhorts. Be abundant alwayes in doing holy and good duties; *for as much as we know certainly that our labour is not in vaine in the Lord.* 1. Cor. 15. 58.

The next thing that comes to be considered in this verse is this: the Apostle calls eternall life the reward of inheritance, he saith, that true believing servants, shall of the Lord, receive the reward of the inheritance, and therein he teacheth two things, I will speake of them in order.

The first is this, that howsoever true believing servants bee mens bond-men, yet are they the Lords free-men: and howsoever they doe service to men, yet they are notwithstanding the children of God, and the Lord doth account them not as servants, but as children: for inheritance (as we know) belongs, and is given to children, and not to servants; and that this is a truth, besides this text, we have evidence for it in many other places, 1. Cor. 7. 2. 14. the Apostle (applying his speech to the comfort of servants and bond-men) tels them, that though they continue servants, yet being in Christ, they are free: for he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lords free-man, 1. Cor. 12. 13. the Apostle saith, By one spirit, all believers are baptized into one body, they are members of the same mystical body of Christ, whether bond or free, and so the adopted sonnes and daughters of God.

The reason of this doctrine, namely this: true believing servants (as they are believers) differ not from other believers, but are all one with them in Christ, as the Apostle saith, Gal. 3. 28. *There is neither bond nor free, but all are one in him:* in him they are equall with others in respect of justification in the sight of God, in respect of adoption to be the children of God, and in that respect their particular outward difference, as that they are servants, is not regarded, as either any helpe or hindrance unto them; as they are believers, as they are in Christ, they are *Abrahams seed*, and heires by promise, Galat. 3. ver. 29. they are the children of God, and heires of all the blessings of God in this life, and in the life to come.

And therefore true believing servants (though they be servants to men) yet

V. 2.

A ground of comfort and encouragement to true believers to doe good duties.

Def. 3.

Though true believing servants be mens bond-men, yet they are the Lords free-men, and the Lord accounts them as children.

Comfort for
true believing
servants, against the
consideration
of their hard
and base con-
dition.

Doct. 4.
Eternall life
being a re-
ward, is a re-
ward, not of
merit, but of
mercy.

for all that they are the children of God, and the Lord doth so esteeme them as his adopted sonnes and daughters in Christ.

Let all true believing servants lay up this truth in their hearts, as a ground of sweet comfort unto them: they may haply at some time (through their owne weaknesse) be somewhat discouraged, and their mindes may be something cast downe in them, when they looke on their outward estate; (and as flesh and blood esteemes it) their hard condition in the world, as that they are not as many others are, *scilicet* i^{er}u^{sa}l^{em}, they are not their owne men, but are in subjection under others, and at the becke, at the call and command of others; and their condition is servile and base.

But what doest thou troubling and vexing thy selfe with the consideration of thy meane condition amongst men? art thou a true believer? doest thou truly beleeve in Iesus Christ? then set thy thoughts on that honour thou art called unto; thou art then the adopted sonne or daughter of God, fellow heire with the sonne of the Lord, and King of heaven; and thou hast right to all the comforts of his children in this life, and to his everlasting inheritance in his Kingdome of glory. And though thou beest but a servant to men, yet even thy servitude is sweetened unto thee, and thou art more than a servant to the Lord: thou art his sonne through Christ; and therefore thinke on it to thy comfort.

Indeed, if thou that art a servant, bee not a true believer, but as yet in thy naturall condition, thou art then in a miserable servitude: thou art then not only a servant to man, but a servant to sinne, a slave to the Divell, and thy servitude is accursed to thee: and therefore hasten (as much as thou canst) out of that fearefull servitude, and never rest, till thou bee sure thou dost truly beleeve in Christ; and once truly believing in him, it is not thy outward condition (be it never so base) that can hinder thee from being the sonne of God. Thou art then his adopted child, in, and through Christ: and then thou art within compasse of his speciall love and favour, and hast right to all the comforts of his children, both in this life, and in the life to come.

Now the second thing the Apostle teacheth us (in calling eternall life the reward of inheritance) is this: That eternall life, though it bee a reward, yet it is not a reward given of merit, but of mercy: it is a reward freely given, and not deserved, being a matter of inheritance.

For wee know an inheritance is freely given by the father, to the child; and not deserved by any merit of well doing: it is given by the father to the child, of the mere love of the father; and (it may bee) it was provided for him before he was borne, or before hee could doe anything for himselfe, and so our Saviour speakes plainly of the heavenly inheritance, *Mat. 25. vers. 34.* *Inherit the Kingdome prepared for you from the foundations of the world.* And every man that knowes any thing, knowes thus much, that an earthly inheritance amongst men is not given to the servant, who (haply) hath done something, and helped his master in getting, or keeping of it. But it is given to the child, who (it may be) is so farre from doing any thing to the purchasing of it, as that yet he is an infant and a suckling.

And so eternall life, being called the reward of inheritance; wee are thereby given to understand, that it is given to Gods children, not on any desert of theirs, but freely, *Roman. chap. 8. vers. 23.*

It is worth our marking, that the Apostle having said, *The wages of sinne is death.* Hee goes not on (as the Rhemists themselves on that place confesse) in the sequell of the speech required. He saith not on the contrary, the wages or reward of holinesse is eternall life: but hee chaungeh his termes, and saith, but eternall life, is the gift of God. A plaine prooffe, that eternall life is not given on merit or desert; but freely of the free grace of God: it is the free gift of God.

And

And the reason of this is not onely want of proportion, betweene that which wee doe, or can doe, and eternall life. But because the Lord alone will have all the glory of the salvation of his chosen: we will not have man to have any part of that glory. And therefore the Apostle saith, Ephes. chap. 2. verf. 9. *By grace ye are saved through faith, not of workes, lest any man should boast himselfe: lest any should glory that hee brings any thing to the procurement of his owne salvation.*

We see then the point is proved, that eternall life, though it be a reward, yet it is not a reward of merit, but of mercy: a reward freely given, not deserved by any thing done by us.

First, this serves to confute and overthrow the opinion of the Papists, who teach, that eternall life is properly the reward of good workes, and given to them that are first justified by Christ, not *gratis* and freely, but as wages due to their good workes, on their desert, and for the merit of them; yea, that God hath set forth heaven to sale, for our workes: wee finde these very words in their writings: yea, some of them write thus, that a supernaturall worke, (proceeding from grace within it selfe, and of it owne nature) hath a proportion, and condignity with the reward, and sufficient value to bee worth the same: a doctrine most wicked, and full of derogation from Gods glory: and (besides the error in the foundation of it) supposing a double justification in the sight of God, which they are never able to proove by the word of God; it cannot stand with the doctrine now delivered, and proved out of the word of God: for if eternall life be a reward freely given, then not on the desert and dignity of any thing done by us: free gift, and due deserved debt cannot stand together.

Oh but saith the Papist, the Apostles word in this place is *μισθωδον*, a word that signifies retribution, a rendring one for another: and the English word [*reward*] supposeth a former pleasure that is rewarded; otherwise it were to be called a gift, and not a reward: and the Greeke and Latine word *merces*, and (*Merces*) rather signifie a mans hire and wages; than a gift, or a reward.

I answer them, the originall word heere used, and the Latine and English word, doe (indeed) suppose something done, and they have relation to something done that is rewarded: but what then? doth that prove that the reward is given for the merit of the thing? because it is given in respect of something done, doth it thereupon follow, that it is given for the worth and dignity of it? nothing lesse; they are never able thence to evince it, that is but a loose and dis-joynd conclusion.

And again, the Apostle here not only useth the word *μισθωδον*, or (reward) but he joynes to it [*of inheritance*] thereby giving us to understand, that the retribution of heavenly inheritance, is not the seward merited, but the reward promised and freely given to Gods children.

They further reply and say, the text is plaine, Hebr. 6. 10. that heaven is the reward merited by good workes, insomuch as the author of that Epistle saith, God should be unjust if he rendred not heaven for the same: for God (saith he) is not unrighteous that he should forget your worke and labour of love, which ye shewed towards his name, in that ye have ministered unto the Saints, and yet minister.

Answer. In that text there is no such matter, that God should bee unjust if hee rendred not heaven for the merit of good workes, that can never bee thence concluded by any good forme of reasoning: Indeed God should bee unjust if hee keepe not his promise, which is to reward the good workes of true beleevers, hee having freely promised in Christ to reward the workes of his children: he hath bound himselfe by his promise to reward them, and if hee should

Reason.

Use. Confutation of the opinion of the papists touching the merit of workes.

Object.

Answer. 1.

Answer. 2.

Object.

Answer.

Vse 1.
We must make
title to life e-
ternall, only as
we are Gods
adopted chil-
dren in Christ.

*Moinsgo on to
the next
chapter*

A popish ca-
vill answered.

should forget to do (which is impossible) then hee should bee unjust. And hence it is, that the author of that Epistle saith, *God is not unrighteous, that he should forget your worke and labours of love, &c.* and so that place makes nothing for the opinion of the Papists, that eternall life is given as a reward for the merit of good workes; but it still remaines a truth, that eternall life is the reward of mercy, and not of merit.

And this being so, that eternall life is a reward of inheritance freely given to Gods children, we must looke that we make title to it no other way, but onely as we are Gods children; onely as wee are the adopted sonnes and daughters of God in Christ. Say not thou (as commonly blinde and ignorant people use to say) I know I must love God above all, and my neighbour as my selfe; and if I doe my good will to do, God will be mercifull to me, and I shall goe to heaven; that is to say claime to heaven as a servant, not as a sonne: thou must say (when thou hast done all things commended thee) thou art an unprofitable servant. *Luke 17. 10.* Yea saith the Papist (here hee puts in his absurd gloss) say so for humilities sake; though, indeed we are not unprofitable: a poore shift, and a fottish.

We are taught to say for humilities sake indeed, that we are unprofitable servants, but not against the truth. Doth our Saviour teach us to say that which is not true, for humilities sake, when he bids us say, we are unprofitable servants? No (without question) he doth not: wee are to say so; and in so saying, wee speake the truth. We deserve no good thing (by our best workes) at the hands of God: we are ever to renounce all merit of our owne workes, and to challenge onely claime to heaven, onely, as we are children of God, adopted in Christ, by whose merit we are justified, and by whose spirit we are sanctified. And yet, we are not hereupon to cast off all care of doing good workes: though wee are to disclaime all merit of good workes, yet we are not to lay aside the care of doing of them. No, we are to expresse our thankfulness to God for his mercy, by all holy obedience.

If wee are to bee thankfull to God for every bit of bread wee put into our mouthes (as it is our duty, because it is the free gift of God: and the use and comfort we finde in it, comes from the blessing of God,) then much more are we to be thankfull to God for making us (that were by nature children of the Divell) his owne children by adoption, yea sonnes and heires, even joynt heires with Christ his naturall sonne, of that everlasting inheritance in his owne kingdom of glory.

And therefore thinke not that now, because wee may not lay claime to life eternall, for the merit of our owne good workes, therefore we may neglect them; no, no, if thou be a child of God, the spirit of God will bee powerfull in thee to another purpose: then the consideration of thy title by grace to the inheritance in heaven, will make thee say as David did, *1 Chron. 17. 16.* *Lord who am I that thou shouldst thinke of me, and chuse me, and make me thy child by adoption, and give me a title to thy heavenly kingdom? what shall I render unto thee for this thy unspeakable mercy towards me?* and thou wilt then studie to shew thy selfe thankfull to God for his mercy in all holy obedience, in doing all good duties that concerne thee: and therefore deceive not thy selfe; if thou feele not this working in thy selfe, thou hast not the spirit of God; and if thou have not his spirit, thou art none of his; and if thou be none of his child, thou hast no right nor title to his heavenly inheritance: for onely as wee are sonnes and daughters of God in Christ Iesus, have wee right to the reward of everlasting inheritance.

The second amplification of the argument is in the last words [for yet saith the Lord Christ.] This is a reason why servants are to looke for the reward of inheritance, because that in serving their masters they doe serve the

Lord;

Lord, yea, he takes their service as done to himselfe.

Hence is then comfort and assurance to all true believing servants (doing their duty to their Masters) that they shall receive the reward of inheritance at the hands of the Lord, for they serve him: and it is iust and equall, that hee to whom the service is performed, should pay them their wages, and this the Lord will never deny; his word is past from him, his promise is out, and therefore doubt not of it: if thou beleeve in Christ, and doe thy duty to thy master, the Lord will certainly returne thy good service into thy bosome, with his blessing in this life, and will also give thee the reward of eternall inheritance in the life to come, thinke on it to thy comfort.

Ver. 25. *But he that doth wrong shall receive for the wrong that he hath done, and there is no respect of persons.*

In this verse, the Apostle brings a second argument to strengthen and enforce his exhortation touching the duty of Servants, and he doth hearten and encourage them to doe their duty, and to goe on in the doing of it, by an argument of comfort against the injuries and wrong done to them, from a generall sentence; that wrong done shall one day bee redressed, and that the wrong doer shall receive for the wrong hee hath done: the Lord will one day repay it with deserved punishment. In which argument he prevents a secret objection. For haply servants (especially in the daies of the Apostle, when they were bought and sold, and hardly used, might say unto him, you tell vs that we beleeving in Christ and doing our duty to our Masters, there is a rich reward abiding for us; and that of the Lord we shall receive the reward of inheritance.

But alas our present condition is intolerable, wee are hardly intreated, and sustaine great wrong and injury: this the Apostle meets withall in this argument, and tells them to their comfort, that one day their wrongs shall be righted, and there will come a time when the Lord will punish the wrong doer, and give his iust desert.

And this argument is further amplified by the property of the Lord in giving iudgement (namely this) that hee is a righteous and unpartiall Iudge, not respecting any mans person, in the last words, *and there is no respect of persons.*

And so the summe and substance of this verse is a generall ground of comfort to all that are oppressed, and suffer wrong, here particularly applied to servants suffering wrong at the hands of their masters, that one day the Lord will take their cause into his hand, and give the wrong doer his iust deserved punishment, and that without partiality.

Come we to the words as they are laid downe by the Apostle.

And first of the argument.

(*But he that doth wrong shall receive for the wrong that he hath done*) That is, he that deales uniuersally with another (for the word properly signifieth, he that doth hurt, or harme another, or others; and the Apostle puts these two together, 1 Cor. 6. 8, *Ye your selves doe wrong: and doe harme, and this to your brethren*) and so the meaning is, he that doth hurt, or harme another, or others in person, goods, or good name: (*shall receive*) meaning from the Lord, or from the hand of the Lord. (*For the wrong that he hath done*) the words are (*the wrong that hee hath done*) it is Metonymicall speech, putting downe the efficient cause for the effect, the meaning is, iust punishment for the wrong done.

Thus then briefly consider wee these words, as if the Apostle had said: But hee that doth hurt or harme another in person, goods, or good name, shall receive from the hands of the Lord, iust punishment for the same.

Ecc

Now

Comfort for true beleeving servants doing their duty to their masters.

Now heere in the first place marke wee the argument the Apostle useth: having in the verse before encouraged true believing servants to doe their dutie to their masters by an argument from the rich reward they shall receive: heere he addes further encouragement and comfort unto them by an argument from the punishment of such as wrong them, that such as wrong them shall receive from the Lord just punishment.

In the first place hee comforts them from the rich grace and mercie of the Lord in rewarding their well doing.

In the second, from his justice in punishing wrong doers.

Heere then note we: That to true beleiving servants, and indeed, to all true beleivers, doing their duties in their places and callings, both Gods mercie and also his justice are comfortable. It is a comfort to Gods children keeping faith, and a good conscience, to consider, that the Lord is both a gracious, a free, and a liberall rewarder of well-doers and that hee is also a just avenger and punisher of wrong-doers. Gods children many times finde sweetnesse in the consideration of the justice of God, I say, many times, not alwaies, yea in the remembrance of his wrath, and judgements against evill. David speaks plainly to this purpose, Psalm. 119. 52. *I remember thy judgements of old, O Lord, and have bene comforted.* Hee was staied up and comforted in time of his oppression and trouble, by considering the Lords justice manifested in executing judgement against the wicked; and thus it is with all Gods children: they with comfort many times consider and remember the justice of God and his wrath and judgement on evill doers, and the reason is this.

Thereby they know and are assured that the Lord will not suffer the rod of the wicked to rest on them, and that (as the Apostle saith, 1 Thes. 1. 6.) it is a righteous thing with God, it stands with his justice to recompence tribulation to them that trouble his children, and to them that are troubled, rest and refreshing.

Heere is then a manifest difference betweene the children of God, and the wicked: there is nothing in God but it is comfortable to his children; even the consideration of his justice, and that hee is a punisher of evill doers, is many times full of sweetnesse to them: but on the contrary the wicked cannot abide at any time to thinke on Gods justice and that he is a just judge, and punisher of evill doers: no, no, they put the justice and judgements of God as farre out of their mindes as possibly they can, and they frame to themselves a God all of mercy, and indeed an idoll God. And heereby trie thy selfe: if thou finde that it is even dreadfull to thee to thinke of Gods justice and wrath, and that hee is a punisher of evill doers, and thou dost labour to stifle all thought and consideration of that, and thou art ever harping on his mercy, and dost frame to thy selfe a God all of mercy, and couldest wish that God were made all of mercie: it is a foule argument thy heart is not right within thee, and therefore remember and think on this, that Gods children many times find comfort even in the consideration of the justice of God, and that he is a just punisher of evill doers, and never rest till thou also, at some time or other find comfort therein, yea that thou canst with comfort thinke on the just judgements that shall bee given by the iudge of all the world at his coming, and canst even wish and pray for that day, and with comfort cry out, as it is Revelation the 22. chapter and the 20. verse, *Come Lord Iesus, come quickly.*

Consider we in the next place the matter of the Apostles argument, he saith, *Hee that doth wrong shall receive for the wrong that he hath done at the hand of God just punishment.*

Heere then wee see it plainly laid before us, that the Lord will certainly punish wrong-doers. Such as wrong their brethren, and any way oppresse them shall not escape the punishing hand of God, the Lord will not suffer them

Dott. 1.

Both Gods mercy and iustice are comfortable to true beleivers doing their duties in their places and callings.

Reason.

Vse.

Difference betweene Gods children and the wicked when they thinke upon Gods justice.

Dott. 2.

The Lord will certainly punish wrong-doers.

them that wrong their brethren (except they repent) to go unpunished, but they shall certainly receive iust punishment from his hand. *bliss & worth na*

We find in Deuter. 32. 35. the Lord saith vengeance, and recompence of wrong from him, is so certaine, as it is laid up in store with him and sealed up among his treasures. Proverb. 21. 22. 23. saith Salomon, *rob not the poore because hee is poore, neither oppresse the afflicted in iudgement. For the Lord will defend their cause, and spoile the soules of those that spoile them.* Prover. 23. 10. *Remove not the ancient bounds, and enter not into the field of the Fatherlesse.* Verse 11. *For hee that redeemed them is mighty: hee will defend their cause against thee.* 1 Thessal. 4. chapter 6. verse 1. The Apostle exhorteth, that no man oppresse, or defraude his brother in any matter, and hee gives this reason, for the Lord is the avenger of all such things.

And indeed, the reason and ground of this is, the truth and iustice of God: the Lord is as iust, and as true in his threatnings, as in his promises, and no lesse righteous in recompencing vengeance to evil doers, than in his free and liberall rewarding of well-doers.

Let this then strike a terror into the hearts of all wrong-doers, even into the hearts of all that any way wrong their brethren, of which sort there be many in the world. Do not many of our hearts tell us we are guilty of doing wrong to our brethren? No doubt the conscience of most men can tell them, they have done wrong to their brethren one way or other, either in their persons by hard usage, or in their goods by violence, or fraud, or in their good names, by backbiting and slandering, and the like, it may be more wayes than one; well consider thou, that for the wrong thou hast done, or dost, to thy brethren, there is punishment and vengeance laid up in the hands of the Lord for thee, and it is laid up in a sure hand, even in the hand of him, who will be sure to finde thee out, and inlesse thou in time doe truly humble thy selfe, and repent, will bee sure to poure it downe upon thee, and thou shalt not escape it, and thinke not, because haply thou art a man of place and power, and thy poore underling oppressed and wronged by thee, dare not complaine, or open his mouth to men against thee, therefore thy case is good enough: no, no, howsoever the poore or me trodden upon, dare not open his mouth, yet the sinne it selfe opens a de mouth against thee, it cries loud, and makes a loud crie in the eares of the Lord, *Isaiah, 5. 7. I looked for iudgement, but behold oppression, for righteousness I beheld a crying.*

Oppression and wrong doing is a crying sinne, and will never rest till it be downe iudgements, sometimes it brings downe visible iudgements in this life, though not alwayes, 2 Peter chapter 2, verse 9. *The Lord reserves them unto the day of iudgement to be punished;* Yea, though the Lord regard not the persons, or prayers of wicked men oppressed, and intolously dealt withall, yet hee many times, regards their cause, and hee heares the oppression and wrong crying to him, and will punish the wrong-doer. Yea now wee further, that though wrong bee done by thee, bee forgiven by tharty, and hee prayes for thee as Stephen did, Acts chapter 7. verse 60. *Id lay not this sinne to their charge,* yet till thou thy selfe bee truly humble and repent of thy sinne, thou standest liable to punishment: the Lords iustice will not suffer wrong to escape unrevenge: thinke on this thou that art gilty of wrong-doing heeretofore, and let every one of us ever hereafter take hede of so foule a sinne.

Again, it is so that the Lord will punish wrong doers, and not suffer them to escape a punishing hand? heere is then a sweet comfort for such as are wronged away, and can have no reliefe nor remedy at the hands of men, they must remember that howsoever men regard them not, nor have any care to see their wrongs righted, yet the Lord that sees all things hee sees them,

Eee 2

Reasons.

Vse 2.
Terror to all
wrong-doers,

Vse 1
Comfort for
such as are
wronged and
can find no
reliefe nor re-
medy at the
hands of men

Note.

and hee regards them, and he will one day revenge them.
 Art thou a child of God, that art wronged? here is then double comfort for thee: thy well-doing shall receive reward, and thy suffering wrongs shall finde a revenge, and therefore thou above all other, possesse thy soule in patience, commit thy cause to him that iudgeth iustly, and take heed thou never goe about to avenge thy selfe. It is the Apostles exhortation, Rom. 12. 19. *Dearly beloved, avenge not your selves, but give place unto wrath: for it is written, vengeance is mine I will repay, saith the Lord: and it is built on this very ground, Vengeance is mine, and I will repay: if thou seeke to avenge thy selfe, thou incroashest on the Lords a right, and then thou wrongest thy selfe, and provokest the Lord to displeasure against thy selfe.*

Obiect.

May I not seeke remedy and redresse of my wrongs at the hands of the Magistrate, and at the hands of such as are set in place to right wrongs?

Answer.

Yes (doubtlesse) thou mayest for great wrongs, such as endanger thy life, or state, thou maist seeke redresse at the hands of the Magistrate; but yet in seeking lawfull remedy, remember still thou carry a meeke minde, bee farre from all desire of revenge, and if thou finde no redresse at the hand of the Magistrate, but thou art further wronged and oppressed to the losse of goods, yea of life it selfe, yet still commit thy cause to the Lord, and the revenge offer to him, and hee (doubtlesse) will give the wrong-doer (if hee continue in his sinne) his iust deserved punishment bee hee never so great, or mighty, a sweet comfort for all poore wormes oppressed by the mighty men of the world.

Art thou a servant (for to thee did the Apostle chiefly intend this comfort) and art thou wronged by an hard dealing master? Remember thou, God sees thy wrong, and he will one day avenge thy wrong, if thou commit it to him in godly patience. Indeed if thou take on thee to avenge thy wrong thy selfe thou doest then lose the benefit of Gods regard, and thou shalt surely taste of his rodde for so offending. But if thou in patience possesse thy soule, and commend thy cause to him, certainly the Lord will one day set thee at liberty, avenge thy cause, and render vengeance into the bosome of the that wrong thee.

Come wee to the amplification of the Apostles argument in the last word of the verse, [*And there is no respect of persons.*] Wherein hee sets downe the property of the Lord in giving iudgement, that hee is a iust and most impartiall iudge, and with the Lord there is no respect of persons: for soe sentence is to be supplied, as we have it expressly set downe, Romans the second Chapter, the eleventh verse, Ephesians chap. 6. vers. 9. and in many other places.

Interpretation

(*And there is no respect of persons.*) The words properly signifie no respect of face, or outward appearance, for the original word (*προσωπον*) fillen the face, or outward shew: wee finde it so rendred, 2 Cor. 5. vers. 12. *blow reioyce in the face, and not in the heart:* and so by the word (*person*) we are to understand the outward quality, or the outward state and condition (*man*), even that in man which is conspicuous and to bee discerned by others, which doth commonly make him more, or lesse esteemed amongst men, as *antrey*, sex, state of life (as that hee is a Father, a Master, a servant &c.) *riches*, poverty, wisdom, learning, &c: and not to respect the person in judgement, is not to bee moved, or carried through any partiall affection towards any, or from any, in regard of his outward quality and condition, eith to spare any, because of his dignity and preferment above others in the world, or to pittie another because of his inferiority and low estate amongst men: but to give iust iudgement according to the cause and workes of eve one. Thus then conceive wee the meaning of these words, as if the Apo had spoken more

more largely thus : And in giving of judgement there is no regard with the Lord of the outward quality or state of any man ; hee will not spare any in respect of his outward dignity and state in the world ; neither will hee pity any in regard of his meane quality and condition amongst men, but hee will judge every one, high or low, rich or poore, uprightly according to his workes.

First, here wee see plainly laid before us, the absolute righteousness of the Lord in giving iudgement : that hee will give iust iudgement to every one, not regarding the outward appearance or condition of the person whatsoever, so prevent iudgement.

And hence it is that the Apostle calles the last iudgement, the declaration of the iust iudgement of God, Romans the second and the fifth ; and then hee goes on further, to shew the iustice of God in giving iudgement : that hee will reward every man according to his workes, that is, to them which by continuance in well doing, seeke glory, honour, and immortality, eternall life, &c. and hee gives this selfe same reason of it, verse the eleventh, *for there is no respect of persons with God* : and this uprightness in giving iudgement without partiality, is signified by the white Throne, spoken of in the 20 chapter of the Revelation, verf. 11. for the white colour in Scripture, is used to represent purity, and glory : and in that place it signifies, that the Iudge shall give most iust and uncorrupt iudgement, and free from all spot of partiality.

And the reason of this is manifest, namely this : the most holy and glorious maiesty of God is free from all finister and corrupt affection, hee is most iust and pure, yea iustice and purity is selfe : and those things which often times carry earthly Iudges awry, and cause them to swarve in iudgement, and to respect persons, are not found in the Lord. Earthly Iudges (many times) respect persons, and are partiall, for feare of the mighty, or for love of friends, or hatred of enemies, or the like. Now these corrupt affections are not in the Lord ; and therefore he will certainly give just iudgment, not sparing or pitying any, in respect of outward quality or condition. Iob. 34. 19. *He accepteth not the persons of Princes, and regardeth not the rich more than the poore : for they be all the workes of his hands.*

But against this (haply) some may object and say : Wee reade, Matth. 11. verf. 22. our Saviour saith. It shall bee easier for Tyrus and Sydon at the day of iudgement, than for them of Corazin and Bethsaida. And againe, for the land of Sodome, than for Capernaum, at the day of iudgement : verf. the 24. and hee gives this reason of it : Because many great workes were done in those places : their outward condition was better, in regard of their outward meanes of repentance. Capernaum was lift up to heaven, in regard of the preaching of Christ, and his working of miracles there. And againe, Luk. chap. 12. verf. 47. 48. hee saith, The servant that knew his masters will, and prepared not himselfe, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes, but he that knew it not, and yet did commit things worthy of stripes, shall bee beaten with few stripes. Where we see (may some say) iudgement shall bee given according as men (doing things worthy stripes) are qualified, either with knowledge, or ignorance ; and therefore it may seeme, that the Lord at the day of iudgement will respect persons, and regard the outward quality and condition of men.

For answer to this, we must know, that indeed some qualities or outward conditions doe aggravate, or lessen sinne, and doe make it greater or lesse : as (no doubt) the Ministers sinne is greater in respect of his calling : *Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thy selfe ? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal ?* Rom. chap. 2. verf. 21. the Magistrates sinne is greater in

Doctr. 3.
God will give iust iudgement to every one not regarding the outward condition of the person.

Reason.

Objection.

Answer.

regard of his place and authority, hee having charge of the Law, and being keeper of both the Tables of Gods Law, through breaking the Law, doth more in that respect dishonour God: and the private mans sinne is distended and made greater, by the common good meanes, and personall good gifts God hath vouchsafed him, and iudgement, and punishment (without repentance) is like to be answerable: the Lord will give iudgement and punishment according to the sinne, and reward a greater or lesser degree of punishment, as the sinne is greater or lesse, in respect of the quality and condition of the impenitent sinner.

But what then, is the Lord an acceptor of persons in iudgement? nothing lesse, for to accept persons in iudgement, is through a corrupt and partiall affection, in respect of the person, to pervert iudgement, and to give wrong and uniuert iudgement.

What it is to
accept persons
in iudgement.

Now the Lord is farre from this, in giving and awarding greater or lesse punishment, as the sinne is greater or lesse, not onely in the kinde or nature of sinne it selfe, but in regard of the quality or condition of the sinner. Therein the Lord deales most iustly, and is farre from all touch of partiality, hee is not moved by the quality or condition of the person to spare or pitty any unjustly, but hee will give iust and proportionable iudgement and punishment to every one, living and dying in sinne, according as his sinne shall bee, even greater or lesse, and yet ever iust in regard of his quality and condition: and so it still remaines a truth, that the Lord will give iust iudgement to every one, and not accept any mans person, in regard of his outward quality and condition, to pervert iudgement.

Vse 1.
We must take
heed we rest
not upon any
outward con-
dition, as able
to stand us in
stead in the
day of iudge-
ment.

Let this then in the first place teach every one of us to take heed how we rest on any outward quality or condition, as able to stand us in stead, in the great day of Gods iudgement, yea, as a meanes to move the Lord to spare us, or to pitty us, and not to award iust sentence and iudgement against us for our sinnes.

Is there any so unwise, as to thinke that his outward state and condition in the world, shall doe him any good when he comes to stand before the tribunall and iudgement seat of the Lord?

Object.

I make no question but all that be of any yeeres and discretion, having lived in the bosome of the Church, and a long time under the meanes of knowledge, are conuincd in conscience of this truth, and will confesse it to be a truth: that at the day of iudgement, no outward state or condition shall stand any man in stead, to free him from the iust iudgement of the Lord: and that the Lord will not then regard the rich more than the poore, nor the great man and Prince, more than the meanest subiect.

Answer.

But yet I must tell you there bee too sorts of people that (notwithstanding this confession) presume the Lord will deale favourably with them in respect of outward things; the one sort are carnall professors, and the others are ignorant persons: for the first of these, doe not many persons thinke that because they are borne and brought up in the bosome of the Church, they have bene baptized and made partakers of the holy ordinances of God, therefore the Lord will bee mercifull unto them, and not give sentence of condemnation against them, they shall never come into the iudgement of condemnation, though their hearts and lives abound with foule sinnes?

And againe: Doe not many ignorant persons thinke that the Lord will hold them excused, and not deale with them according to their sinnes in respect of their ignorance? even because they are ignorant, therefore the Lord will hold them excused? Indeed ignorance that is not voluntary, shall excuse not altogether from sinne, but from so great sinne: but ignorance wilfull and affected, such as is the ignorance of them who live under the meanes of know-
ledge,

ledge, doth rather aggravate and increase sinne; than any thing mitigate or lessen it.

And therefore deceive not thy selfe, and let every one take heed how he presumes that the Lord will be favourable to him; and hold him excused: because he hath the outward calling of a Christian, or because he is ignorant; remember this, that the Lord is no acceptor of persons, hee in giving judgement will not spare, nor pitty thee in respect of thy outward quality or condition: no, so that shall then stand thee in no stead, unlesse it be to heape up judgement upon thee; and neuer rest thou, till thou be sure that thou art a lively member of Iesus Christ: in whom alone thou shalt be accepted, and be able to stand with comfort before the Lord, at his comming to judgement.

Againe, is it so, that the Lord at the day of judgement will give just judgement, not accepting any mans person whatsoever, nor regarding the outward state of any man? here is then further comfort for poore soules oppressed by great men in the world: the Lord will not only one day punish their oppressors (unlesse they repent for their oppression and wrong) but he will doe it without all partiality, and without all respect of persons: their greatnesse shall not stand them instead to beare off the stroke of the Lords punishing hand: no, no, they shall appeare before the Lord as naked and void of all greatnesse, as the poorest man in the world. Let all that suffer wrong and hard measure at the hands of great ones, thinke on that to their comfort.

In that the Apostle saith, The Lord is no acceptor of persons in judgement, this pointeth out the duty of all those that beare the image of God in any public place of authority either in Church or Common-wealth: they are to be like to the Lord in judging without respect of persons, as the Prophet saith, Isa. 28. 17. They must lay judgement to the rule, and right counsell to the ballance, they must heare causes indifferently, and determine them equally, examine them (as it were) by line and square (as the Mason or Carpenter doth his worke) they must be ware of favouring the great ones for their greatnesse, which is to decline on the left hand, and of pitying, and in pity favouring the part of the poore and meaner sort, in respect of their low degree, and howsoever that may be thought a vertue, even by men wise and well minded; yet that it is a fault, and sinne, the text is plaine, Exodus 23. 3. Levit. 19. 15. wee there finde it expressly forbidden, to respect the poore man in his cause or question of strife: and thus farre may this concerne us: we are called sometimes to umpire and judge of matters of difference betweene parties, and therein we must take heed wee be not corruptly carried with any partiall affection in respect of the quality of any party to judge amisse.

We must looke to the cause, and lay away all sinister respect of persons, yea, every one of us is to be guided by this rule in judging of sinne: it is the fault of the most to judge that to be sinne in some, which they deeme not to be so in others. For example, many will judge and condemne that as covetousnesse, or pride, or garishnesse, setting out the lightnesse and vanity of their mind, in strangers, which they will not so judge & so condemne, if it be found in their owne neare friends; as in wife, child, father, mother, kinsmen, and such like, as though diversity of subiect could make the selfe same thing a sinne in some, and not in other some; and thus it is with many in the world: and what is this, but as *Iames* saith, chap. 2. 4. to be partiall in our selves, and iudges of evill thoughts, that is, judges ill affected, carrying in us perverse and crooked thoughts, and iudging in respect of persons. Thou must iudge sinne to be sinne, and condemne it, though it be never so neerely resident, and found in thy dearest friends; and if thou doe not so, surely thou hast neither a true dislike and hatred of sinne, nor a true love of thy friends: for a true dislike of sin, will make thee dislike it wheresoever it is found; and he loves his friend truly, that hath learned to love him,

Use 2.
Comfort for poore soules oppressed by great men in the world.

Doftrine 4.
Such as beare Gods image in any place of authority, are to be like the Lord in judging without respect of persons.

Use.
We are to iudge of sinne without respect of persons, and therein many are faulty.

Note.

or

or her spiritually, and cannot abide sinne in the party loved, without some reasonable admonition and reproofe.

And therefore, if we would not shew it, that we have no true dislike of sinne, even becaus it is sinne, and displeasing to God; nor any true love of our friends (which we would be loth that any should thinke of us.)

Let us learne to iudge and condemne sin in whomsoever it is found, without respect of persons: yea, iudge and condemne a sinne to be as great a sinne in thy nearest friend, as in any other whatsoever; and that will seale up sweet comfort to thy soule: that thou hast the spirit of God in thee transforming thee into the image of God; and as thou art like the Lord in

this world, so thou shalt be like to the image of
his Sonne Iesus Christe in the world.

to come. **Answer:** There will be a time when

[illegible]

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

CHAP. IV. VERS. I.

To Masters, doe unto your servants that which is iust and equall, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.



IN this first verse of the Chapter, the Apostle doth still continue his exhortation, begun v. 13. of the fore-going Chapter, containing speciall duties of Christians, as they stand in relation one to another, in some particular state and condition of life: and having before propounded, and urged the duty of servants towards their masters, heere he sets downe (on the other side) the duty of masters towards their servants: and he tells masters, there be two things required of them towards their servants: as namely, that they doe to their servants, *That which is iust*: and, *That which is equall*. And these two things the Apostle doth urge on masters by way of exhortation, generally propounded in these words [*To masters doe unto your servants that which is iust & equall*]. And then hee strengthens this exhortation, and mooves masters to the doing of these two things, by force of argument; and that taken from their subiection, to an higher Lord and master. That they are not absolute masters, and subiect to none, but that they also have a master above them, to whose censure they are subiect, and to whom they must one day yeeld an account (as of all their doings so) of their dealings with their servants.

And this argument the Apostle doth amplify.

First, by their owne knowledge (or at least they ought to know and consider it) *Knowing* (saith the Apostle) *that ye also have a master*.

And then, by setting downe what master it is they have above them, namely, not an earthly but an heavenly master.

And so the generall things laid before us in this verse, are these two.

First, a generall exhortation to masters to doe to their servants, *that which is iust and equall*.

Secondly, a reason to strengthen that exhortation, and to presse these duties on them, namely this, because masters know (or at least ought to know) that they are not absolute masters, and subiect to none, but have also an heavenly Lord and master above them, to whose censure they are subiect, and to whom they must render an account. Of these in their order.

What are we to understand by masters and servants, wee heard before in the 22. verse of the fore-going chapter, namely, such as are masters according to the flesh, and such as are servants for wages, tearme of yeeres, or howsoever.

[Doe]

Interpretation.

[Doe] The word properly signifies, exhibite, or yeeld *[that which is iust]* that is, that you are bound unto, and of right ought to yeeld unto them, and cannot deny them, *[unlesse you deale uniuersally with them]* *[and equall]* that is, that which is meet and fit for you to yeeld to them, even that which is becommeth you to yeeld to them in regard of equity, piety, and a good conscience.

Thus then conceive the meaning of this exhortation: You that are masters according to the flesh, yeeld to your servants, that you are bound unto, and of right ought to yeeld unto them (unlesse you will doe them wrong, and deale uniuersally with them) and that also that becommeth you to yeeld unto them, even in equity, piety, and good conscience.

Now first, the duty of masters towards their servants here expressed, comes to be further considered.

In handling of it, I will lay forth the particulars, wherein the iust dealing of masters towards their servants consisteth.

First, the particular things which masters are of right to yeeld to their servants.

Secondly, the speciall things wherein stands their equall dealing with their servants; and what be the particulars that masters are to yeeld to their servants in equity and good conscience.

Thirdly, I will shew the extent of the duty touching the persons, namely, who be the masters that are to deale iustly and conscientiously with their servants.

And then (after some examination) I will bring some motives to stirre them up (whom this duty concerneth) to the practice of it.

First, therefore know we, that masters are of right to yeeld to their servants three things; their iust dealing with their servants stands in three things.

First in requiring of them, not onely lawfull things, but things proportionable to their power and strength.

For as the master must looke that none of his servants be idle; so he must see that none of them be oppressed: if either of these things come to passe, that the servant be over-burthened, or idle, it is a fault in the master, and hee dealeth not iustly with his servant. Salomon saith, Prou. 12. 10. A righteous man, a iust dealing man, regardeth the life of the beast; he will not loade his poore dunbe beast with too heavy burthens, but he regardeth the life and strength of it: much more ought a master to regard the life and strength of his servant, and accordingly to proportion out his busi nesse and worke.

Secondly, masters are of right to yeeld to their servants provision of meate, drinke, and clothing, or competent wages to provide the same, and that they have their meat, drinke, and wages in due season: for that, the law of God, the law of nature, and the law of nations, and custome among all men, yes, among the very heathen requires; and that it is a iust thing, servants (being men like to their masters in flesh and blood) they must be sustained by earthly things, for their labours sake: and therefore our Saviour saith, Mat. 10. 10. The workman is worthy of his meate, that is, of all necessities for the maintenance of this life. In the description of a good huswife, we reade, Pro. 31. 15. that *she riseth while it is yet night, & giveth the portion to her house-hold, and the ordinary to her maids*, though she raise up her servants betime to work, yet she is not cruell towards them, but gives them their food in due season. *She feares not the snow for her family, for all her family is clothed with scarlet, or with double, &c.* She provides warme and thick clothes for her servants that they may be defended against the extremity of cold.

Thirdly, masters are of right to yeeld to their servants iust censure and correction for their faults, they must not censure and correct them without iust cause, or excessively; but they must proportion out their admonitions, rebukes, and Chastisements, according to the offences of their servants: and to that end they must wisely consider the nature and quality of the offence; and of light and small offences, and little oversights, not to take notice. Give silence to all the words that men speake, lest thou beare thy servant cursing thee, Eccles. 7. 23.

[This]

This

Doct. 1.
The duty of
masters to-
wards their
servants.

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The iust dea-
ling of masters
with their ser-
vants, stands
in three things

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This reason is given of it: *For oftentimes thy heart knoweth that thou hast charged others,* verf. 24. thine own heart can tell thee, thou hast spoken as bad words against thy betters: and if the fault be greater, deserving admonition, or rebuke or correction, to measure it out according to the nature and quality of it: hee must also consider, how often, or seldome, the servant hath fallen into that fault, and whether he will be bettered by word only, or no; and if he find that he will not be chastised with words alone, *I though he understand, yet will not answer,* as it is Prov. 29. 19. then to use further chastisement.

And hee must ever take heed of passion in time of his censure, that hee neither rebuke nor correct his servant in rage and passion, for that will certainly carry him beyond iust measure; but hee must doe it in compassion, even mourning in his heart for the sinne of his servant, with desire to helpe him out of it.

And these three things spoken of, are the particulars, that masters are of right to yeeld to their servants.

Now in the second place, the speciall things that masters are to yeeld to their servants in equity and conscience, are these three.

First, moderate rest from their labours, lawfull recreation, without which servants cannot continue with any cheerefulness in the duties of their callings: and herce it is often said in the Law, that thy servant and hand-maid may rest as well as thou, Exod. 23. 12. Deut. 5. 14. Especially masters are bound in equity and conscience, to give their servants liberty to sanctifie the Sabbath, and to keepe an holy rest to the Lord on his day, both publikely and privately: for they being created and redeemed as well as their masters, are as highly indebted to the service and worship of God as their masters: this is plainly expressed in the fourth Commandement.

The second speciall thing that masters are to yeeld to their servants in equity and conscience, is a supply of things needfull (according to their ability) in time of their servants sicknesse. When the servant is under the hand of God by sicknesse, the master must provide (as he is able) all good meanes that serve for his health and recoverie, and that he may have good usage in time of his weaknesse, and not cast him off at large, as the Amalekite did the poore Egyptian, being sicke in the field, 1 Sam. chap. 30. vers. 13. And the Master may not defraud his servant when he is sicke, of things needfull, neither may hee abridge him of any part of his wages, for the time of his sicknesse; because the servant is not then restrained from working by his owne negligence, but by the hand of God; and it may be, hath gotten his sicknesse by his faithfull paines-taking in his masters service; and therefore his master in equity is bound to relieve him with things needfull, and to give him his full wages agreed on betwene them at the first.

The last speciall thing that masters are to yeeld to their servants in conscience is (according to their power) some further recompence, over and above their wages, when they depart from them, according to the good and long service they have done them.

The Lord commanded, that when there was a manumission, a free sending out of servants, they should not let them goe away empty, but that they should give them a liberall reward of that the Lord had blessed them withall, by their service, Deut. chap. 15. vers. 13. 14. Howsoever, that Law was one of the iudicials belonging to the Iewes regiment; yet the equity of it is perpetuall, and belongs to us, and to our posterity for ever. And wee see then what are the speciall things, that masters are to yeeld to their servants, in equity and conscience.

Now, for the third thing propounded, namely, who be the masters that are to deale thus iustly, and conscionably with their servants, that is laid downe in

There be three
speciall things
that masters
are to yeeld to
servants in e-
quity and con-
science.

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Three motives
to stirre up
masters to
doe thus
iustly and
conscionably
with their
servants.

All masters are
to deale iustly
and consciona-
bly with their
servants.

Reprooffe of
such masters
as faile in du-
ties towards
their servants.

And whoso
shall thus
beare witness
against him
that doth
thus, let him
beare witness
in the
presence of
the Lord.

Vse.

Masters are to
try themselves
by the things
before delive-
red.

Three motives
to stirre up ma-
sters to deale
iustly and e-
qually with
their servants.

in the first word [*masters*] The Apostle speaking indefinitely, he gives us to understand, that this duty belongs to all masters whatsoever, without exception, of what state, calling or condition soever they be: and let not any man thinke that his greatnesse in place and calling, or his meane condition can dispen- with the neglect of any of the fore-named particulars. And let all masters try and examine themselves touching the duties delivered, and lay their practice to the rule: and if they so doe, where is the master to bee found that can cleere himselfe, and can iustly say, he hath not failed in his duty towards his servants? And (to passe by them that faile of infirmity, and against their purpose) are there not many masters that faile wittingly and willingly? Are there not some, who are so farre from yeelding that which is iust and right to their servants, as that many waies they wrong them with hard and cruell services, with bur- thens too heavy, with stripes too many, and (which is barbarous, and favour- eth of cruelty) pinch them in their food? Doe they not (as we use to say) both backe-beat them, and belly-beat them? And are there not some who are e- ver finding fault with every trifling over-sight? and if the fault be greater, are there not some who are so farre from considering the nature and quality of the offence, and from griefe and compassion in correcting, as they fall on their ser- vants in a rage and violent passion, rate them, and beat them most unreasonably? And if we looke to things that are to be yeelded to servants in equity and con- science, how doe many masters therein come short of their duty? Doe they not deny their servants moderate rest and recreation, unlesse on the Lords day, when they should be otherwise exercised? Then they can be content their ser- vants should have free liberty to recreate themselves; wherein it doth more harme to their soules, than good to their bodies. And doe not some masters a- bridge their servants of liberty to sanctifie the Sabbath? yea, doe they not (of a covetous mind) compell their servants, haply well minded, even against their wil to breake the Sabbath and to doe the ordinary workes of their callings? And is it not an usuall thing for masters to caule their servants (almost every Sabbath) to tarry at home to dresse meat, and to make ready their dinners? And so indeed, they eat the flesh and drinke the blood of their servants. And are there not many masters, who are so farre from recompencing the good service of their servants with some thing over and above their wages, as (many times) they stay their wages for their sicknesse, or for something they pretend they have lost, or some damage they received by them? Where is almost a master that doth carefully provide things needfull for his servants in time of sicknesse? Nay, doe not many masters murmur and grudge at it, that the poore sick ser- vant eat and drinke, and doth nothing but spend and burthen the family? and if they can by any meanes, they will packe him out of the house: and if once they get him out, never after regard him. These, and the like, are the deal- ings of many masters and governours towards their servants.

Therefore thou being a master, try thy selfe by the things now laid before thee, and finding thy selfe defective and short of that duty thou oughtest to per- forme to thy servants) be humbled for that sinne: it is a sinne against thy perso- nall calling, and therefore a grievous sinne, and so long as thou dost live in that sinne, thou canst have no true peace in thine owne conscience, nor any assurance of Gods speciall protection over thee.

Therefore humble thy selfe, and betimes repent of that sin; and now (knowing thy duty) learne ever hereafter to make conscience of it: and so help thee for- ward, consider further these three things.

First, know that if a master deale uniuersally or unequally with his servants, hee doth exceedingly provoke the Lord to anger and heavy displeasure against him. Vniust or unequall dealing with servants is a crying sin, it calles for vengeance. Behold the hire of the labourers (who are servants for the time) which have reaped

resped poore fields (which is of your kept back by fraud) - which, it maketh a
loud cry in the eares of the Lord of Hosts. *Yea, 34. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*
We finde a fearefull threatening denounced against this sin, *Lev. 24. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*
The King Zedekiah and the people had made a covenant with him, *Lev. 24. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*
liberty, that every man should be his servants be free hand, from man his
hand-maid, which was an Hebrew, or in Hebrew, *Lev. 24. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*
himselfe of them and they afterward departed, and caused the servants and the
hand-maids whom they had let goe free, to recurre and hold them in bondage
on as servants and hand-maids, *Lev. 24. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*
Then followeth the threatening and a
renewall speech, *Lev. 24. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*
To be sure, the Lord is not to be despised, and as his justice, and I will bring you
out of the land of the Egyptians, *Lev. 24. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*
with trembling of all this people unjustly to be condemned with their servants,
indeed unjust dealing with servants is a sinne so displeasing to the Lord, as in
some case it is not sufficient for a sinne to be punished for the sinne, and to make
confession and acknowledgement of it to God, though with Gods reproof, and
much griefe of heart, but he must also make some satisfaction to his servant,
Exod. 21. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.
eye, or smiting out his tooth, must not be contented with saying, I am
sorry for it, or be truly grieved for it: but he must give his servant his liber-
ty and freedom for it, for the rule is true, wrong indeed must be recompen-
sed with some reall recompence, otherwise the Lord accepts not of any hu-
miliation for it, which is a thing little thought on by many masters, who in
their rage beat their servants, or cast stones at them, even when comes next to
hand, to the wounding or slaying of them, and then thinke it enough, or say
am sorry, I was too rash, I will, I had not done it, I pray God forgive me, or
the like: but alas, that is not sufficient, thou must keepe the Lord accept not
thy confession and humiliation for the sinne, unless thou make some satis-
faction to thy poore servant, for his hurt or paine received by thee, if therefore
doubtlesse unjust dealing with servants, is a great and grievous sinne, farre
greater than some conceive it.

Note.

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Again, unjust dealing with servants, is a plaine evidence of want of Gods
feare, *Levit. 25. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*
cruelly, but shall feare thy God.

Where we see an opposition betwene the hard and cruell usage of servants, and
the feare of God. If the people of God under the Law, dealt cruelly with their
brethren being their servants, they shewed plainly they had no feare of God
in them: and the reason is given *Lev. 25. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*
whom he brought out of the land of Egypt.

And is it not a more plaine evidence of want of Gods feare, cruelly and
unjustly to deale with servants under the Gospell bought, and brought out
of spirituall Egypt, and the bondage of sinne and Satan by Christ, and
redeemed with his pretious blood; as well as our selves? without question
it is.

Last of all, consider what Job saith, *Job 13. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*
remne the judgements of his servant, and of his wife, when they did contend
with him, and thinke themselves ill treated by him. Marke his reason verse
14. 15. He that made me in the wombe, shall he not make him? and if I should
deale unjustly or cruelly with them, what then shall I doe when God standeth up?
and when he shall visite me, what shall I answer? as if he had said: if I wrong my
poore servants; how shall I stand before him that is Lord and master of us
both? and how shall I come to him, and call on him with comfort, when his
hand shall be on me, and when he shall visite me with any affliction? a reason
of

of weight and to be thoroughly considered. We see by this, if a master deals unjustly or cruelly with his servants, he shall bee as his witend, and not know what to do; nor have with any comfort to looke up to the Lord, and call on him when he doth stand up against him, and visit him with any trouble; especially if the Lord dole him by the undutifull or unconscionable dealing of his servant. For his part with the Lord to do, the master having dealt hardly with the servant, either pressed him with too heave burdens, pierced him in his body cruelly corrected him, or any way wronged him, it is just with the Lord that such a master sometimes suffers paine as he hath done to his servant, and is visited by the undutifull and unconscionable dealing of his servant, yea, sometimes visiteth with that servants tongue, the servant telling abroad to his shame and discredit, his hard usage, and it may be adding some thing more, as that he hath not a good meales meat in a yeere, or the like. When an unjust and cruel master is thus crossed and visited, he cannot appeale to the Lord, and have recourse to him, and pray to him that hee would release him from that crosse: his owne unjust and unconscionable dealing with his servant, sets a barre betweene him and heaven, and hee cannot pray to the Lord with comfort. If then thou that art a Master, wouldst not exceedingly provoke the Lord to anger against thee, and commit a crying sinne, a sinne calling for vengeance, and for which the Lord will not accept thy humiliation without some satisfaction to thy poore servant: If thou wouldst not make it evident, that thou hast no feare of God in thee; if thou wouldst not set a barre betweene thee and heaven, and not be unable to pray to the Lord, with comfort or any assurance of release, when the Lord doth visit thee with any affliction, especially when thou art crossed by the undutifull, and unconscionable dealing of thy servant and visited by the tongue of thy servant, and haply wronged by him: then in the feare of God be admonished to yeeld to every one of thy servants, that which is just and equall. Require of them things proportionable to their strength, give them food and payment, or competent wages to provide them, and that in due time; have care to measure out to them just censure and correction for their faults; yeeld them moderate rest from their labours and lawfull recreations, and in time of their sicknesse provide (as thou art able) all good meanes that serve for their health and recovery, and that they have good usage in time of their weakenesse; and give them also according to thy power some further recompence over and above their wages, at their departure, according to the good and long service they have done thee; and if thou make conscience of these things, doubtlesse the Lord will blesse thee in thy servants, and blesse their labours to thee; and if thou bee crossed by the undutifull or unconscionable dealing of thy servant, yet thou maist have recourse to the Lord with comfort: poure out thy complaint into his bosome, and hee will heare thy prayers.

One thing more may be gathered from this exhortation of the Apostle, considered together with some thing going before.

We are to marke that the Apostle having said in the chapter before, that servants truly beleiving in Christ, and doing their duty to their masters, as they ought in singlenesse of heart, they shall receive of the Lord the reward of everlasting inheritance: the Lord doth esteeme them as his sonnes, and heires of his eternall kingdome of glory, and will reward them as his sonnes and heires: Yet heere hee exhorts masters, to deale justly with them, and to yeeld unto them, meate, drinke, and their just wages. And here masters are bound and of right, ought to give their servants these things; and servants may lawfully receive, and enjoy them, and still looke for the promised reward of eternall life: the point hence arising is this.

That right and title to heavenly inheritance doth not hinder, nor barre any one

one for having part in the outward good things of this life: one that is a childe of God, and joint heire with Chriſt of the kingdom of heaven, may notwithstanding, have, hold, enjoy, and poſſeſſe worldly things, even thoſe things it pleaſeth the Lord to give him, in his place and calling, and yet certainly looke for the promiſed reward of eternall life. It is a fancy and dreame of the Popiſts, which they thruſt on their followers, that to lacke propriety in worldly goods, and willfully to reſuſe the poſſeſſion of them, ſhall have reward in heaven above other ſtates of life: a true beleeving ſervant doing his duty in place and calling, and receiving his wages from his maſter, holding and uſing it as hee ought, ſhall doubtleſſe receive of the Lord, the reward of everlaſting inheritance, when ſuch proud popiſh votaries, who willfully reſuſe to poſſeſſe any worldly goods upon conceit of greater perfection (and indeed reſuſe labour, and all other good exerciſes, and live on the ſweat of other mens browes) ſhall bee thruſt out of heaven, and throwne downe to hell.

Right and title to heavenly inheritance doth not hinder any one from having part in the outward good things of this life.

Vſe.

Confutation of a popiſh fancy.

Interpretation.

Come we to the ſecond generall thing laid downe in this verſe (namely) the reaſon, the Apoſtle uſeth to perſwade all maſters, to yeeld to their ſervants that which is juſt and equall, taken from their ſubjection to an higher maſter, amplified by their owne knowledge of it, or that they ought to know it, and by ſetting downe what maſter it is (namely) not an earthly but an heavenly maſter. (*knowing*) the word is the ſame wee had verſe 24. chap. 3. and ſo to bee expounded (*knowing*) that is, certainly knowing (*yeſe alſo*) that is, even yeſe as well as your ſervants (*have a maſter*) that is, have one above you, who as maſter hath power and authority over you, to call you to an account, for things done or left undone, to whom you muſt yeeld a reckoning and account, as of all other things ſo of your dealing with your ſervants (*in heaven*) the meaning of that amplification is not, that they have a Lord and maſter in heaven, locally circumscribed as the Epicure thinks, Job. 22. 14. but the meaning is a great, mightie, and moſt powerfull Lord and Maſter, even the Almighty Lord of Heaven, becauſe hee is moſt glorious and moſt powerfull, able to puniſh offenders moſt ſeverely, and as the Apoſtle ſaith, Rom. 1. 18. to reveale and manifeſt his wrath againſt them from heaven, even to poure and to raine downe his judgements on them, as a mighty ſtorme that falls with violence from Heaven on the Earth.

Thus then conceive wee the words, as if the Apoſtle had ſaid: Certainly knowing that your ſelves as well as your ſervants have one above you, as a maſter, that hath power and authority over you, to call you to an account for your dealings with your ſervants, even the Almighty Lord of Heaven and earth, who is moſt glorious, mighty and powerfull, able to puniſh you (if you offend) moſt ſeverely, and to throw his judgements on you, as a mighty ſtorme from heaven.

Wee are heere firſt to marke and conſider the argument of the Apoſtle: hee reaſons thus with maſters: ye maſters yeeld to your ſervants that which is juſt and equall, for you your ſelves are under another: you have one as a maſter above you, who hath power and authority to call you to account for your dealings, and to puniſh you if you deale unjuſtly and unconſcionably with your ſervants: where wee ſee the Apoſtle perſwades maſters to doe their duty to their ſervants by an argument from their ſubjection to an higher Lord and maſter, who ſits above them as a Sovereign Lord having power to call them to an account and to puniſh them for their neglect of duty, or any abuſe of their authority, and they are to conſider it.

Hence wee may gather this concluſion: That a ſpeciall meanes to keepe maſters (and indeede men in any place of eminence and ſuperiority) in good order, and to make them carefull of their dutie, and to doe it as they ought, is for them to have an eye upward & ever to look and to fixe their eyes on a ſovereign

Doctrin. 3. If maſters and all ſuperiours continually remember,

that they have a supreme heavenly Lord and master above them, it is a notable meanes to make them conscionable and carefull in doing their duty.

Verf. 22.

Verf. 23.

Verf. 27.

Lord that is above them and all superiours. Men (in any place above others) are ever to carry in mind, and remember that they have a supreme heavenly Lord and master above them, to whose censure they are subject, and to whom they must (one day) render an account of all their dealings: and they shall finde it will be a notable meanes to worke in them a conscience of their duty, and to make them ever carefull to doe aright. Wee have a worthy example of this in *Iob*, he cleares himselfe (being in place above others) from abusing his power, and authority, to the wrong of any poore helpelesse person under him; and he witherth, that (if he lift up his hand against the fatherlesse, that is, used his power, and authority against the fatherlesse, when he might helpe him in the gale, that is, the place of justice) his arme might fall from his shoulder, and bee broken from the bone, *Iob* chap. 31. verf. 21. 22. and marke his reason, what moved him to take heed of abusing his authority, and to abstaine from doing wrong, and dealing unjustly with any, surely this: he had his eye ever upward; his eye, even the eye of his mind, was ever on the great and glorious majesty of the Lord; he knew and remembered that he had a Lord above him, and if he did wrong to his inferiours, he was subject to his punishing hand, as himselfe saith, verf. 23. *For Gods punishment was fearefull unto me, and I could not be delivered from his highnesse.* We reade, *Genes.* chap. 50. verf. 19. that *Ioseph* reasoned thus with his brethren, fearing (their father being now dead) that he would have paid them againe all the evill which they had done to him, and came unto him, and craved pardon of him, and said, *We pray thee forgive the trespasses of thy servants of thy fathers God: Ioseph* made him this answer; *Fear not, for am not I under God?* as if he had said, doe not thinke that I will deale with you as you doe imagine, and take on me (now I have power) to use my power to that end, to requite the wrong you have done to me, no; my brethren, I know I am subject to a higher power, I am under God, and I have mine eye on that great and mighty Lord that is above me; and therefore feare no such matter. A plaine evidence and prooffe of this point, that it is an excellent meanes to keepe masters, and all superiours in order, and from dealing unjustly and unconscionably with their inferiours, even to lift up their eyes and to looke upward, and to remember that they have a supreme Lord above them, to whose censure they are subject, and to whom they must one day give an account.

The reason of this is plaine.

Reason 1.

First, that looking upward, and ever having an eye to that great and mighty Lord that is above them, will worke in them a reverend awe and feare of his glorious majesty: and that feare will temper and season their courage, and cause them to carry in them a conscience of doing right, and keepe them from doing wrong to any.

Reason 2.

Secondly, it will worke in them humility, an humble minde, and humble carriage, and not suffer their minds to swell, nor to be lift up in them above their brethren (which the Lord would not have in the King himselfe) which swelling (indeed) is the cause of scorne and contempt, and of oppression and wrong.

Deut. 17. 20.

Vse. 1.

Whence it is that masters and other superiours abuse their power and authority.

Herby then we may see whence it comes to passe that masters, and other superiours abuse their power and authority, and make no conscience of dealing justly and conscionably with their servants and inferiours; they feare not to wring them, and wrong them, and to deale hardly with them in many respects: here is one speciall cause of it, they looke not upward, they have not an eye and due regard to that great Lord that is above them.

Would masters, and other superiours, if they had an eye to heaven, if they did behold the high and glorious majesty that sits above them, with vengeance in his hand to bee throwne downe upon them, if they deale unjustly and unconscionably with their servants; would they then (as sometimes they doe) not

not care to doe open wrong to their servants, that all men may see and cry shame upon? Or would they covertly and cunningly wrong them, haply under colour of law and justice, equity and conscience? As *Isabell* delt with *Nabab*, 1. *Kin.* 21. Certainly no, if they had any sparke of grace in them, they would not but many masters and superiours looke onely downeward, and their eye is onely on the poore servant, and such as are under them: and thence comes much unjust and unconscionable dealing towards them, and that makes them swell and lift up themselves above them, and their owne corruption (helpt forward by the divell) teacheth them to thinke and say with themselves.

What? Am not I a man of place and authority? am not I in this or that office? Yea, to say as it is *Psalm* 12. 4. *Who is Lord over me?* Who shall checke and controule me for my dealing with my servant, or my inferiour? Who hath any thing to doe with it? with many like speeches.

And therefore thou that art a master, or in any place of superiority above others, ever lift thou up thine eye, and looke up to that great and glorious Lord that is above thee, and remember that he hath power over thee, to call thee to an account, and to censure thee, yea to throw both body and soule into Hell for sinne: and it will be a notable curbe to thee, and hold thee backe, from unjust and unconscionable dealing with any that is under thy power: and wihall remember, that in respect of thy power and authority, thou bearest the Image of God, and wilt thou blot and blemish that, and abase that to worke injustice and to doe wrong? certainly that sinne cannot escape the sharpe punishing hand of God.

Come we to the amplification of the Apostles argument in the word (*Knowing*) that is, certainly knowing, being perswaded of it as a certaine truth: where wee see, the Apostle speaketh to masters among the *Colossians*, as to men certainly knowing, and nothing doubting, but that they had a master above them in heaven. The Apostle made no question, but that it was a knowne truth, whereof masters among the *Colossians* were assured, and fully perswaded: and he doth enlarge his argument, and further presse this duty on them from their owne knowledge of this, that they had a master above them, as if he had sayd: Yee masters doe that which is just and equall to your servants, forasmuch as you are not ignorant, but you certainly know it, that you have one above you as a master, that hath power and authority over you, to call you to an account for your dealings with your servants.

Hence wee gather thus much: that certaine knowledge of the truth of that which is brought in way of argument to perswade to any duty, or to dissuade from any sinne, is of great waight and force to prevaile with them in whom that knowledge is. When a man can say to any person or persons, doe this, for you know how you are bound to doe it, or what will follow the doing of it: or avoide that, for you know the danger of it, it gives great advantage for the seating and setting of that perswasion, or dissuasion on the hearts of them to whom it is directed.

Hence it is that our Apostle doth often use this kinde of enforcement, either to presse some duty, or to dissuade from some sinne, that they to whom he writ, knew this or that, as 1. *Cor.* 6. We have example of it in many verses, as verf. 3. *Do not yee know that the Saints shall judge the world?* verf. 9. *Know yee not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdome of God?* and in many other verses of that chapter. *Ephes.* 5. 5. He useth the same kinde of amplification; *For this yee know, that no whoremonger, &c.* And hither I might bring many other places, wherein the same enforcement and amplification is used, being indeed of great force to settle an argument on the hearts of them to whom it is directed, and the reason is plaine, (namely) this.

The minde and judgement being convinced of the truth of an argument the

Vrf. 2.

Masters and other Superiours are to have an eye to that great and glorious Lord that is above them,

Doct. 4.

Certain knowledge of the truth of an argument either of perswasion, or of dissuasion, is of great force to prevaile with them in whom that knowledge is

Reason.

Vse.
The exceeding
hardnesse and
fearednesse of
many mens
hearts disco-
vered.

the will & affections are more easily wrought on by the same, and more easily moved to embrace or refuse; and consequently, the whole man to practice or decline, according to the drift and purpose of it.

Now this serves to discover the exceeding hardnesse, and (as I may say) the fearednesse of the hearts of many in the world, who will not bee perswaded to that which is good, or dissuaded from that which is evill, though they know that to be most true, yea, truth it selfe, that is brought as an argument to worke on them; as let this undeniable argument be brought to dissuade the swearer, the drunkard or any other prophane person from his sinne; that one day he must appeare before Gods judgement seate and come to judgement for his sinne, and it moves him nothing at all, no, though it be sharpened and driven downe with this enforcement, that he knowes it to bee true, and his owne conscience tells him so, yet the edge of it is many times turned backe, and blunted on the hardnesse of his heart.

Wilt thou say thou swearer, thou drunkard, or thou prophane person who-soever thou art, that thou knowest not this, or thou art not perswaded of the truth of it, that thou must one day come to judgement for thy sinne? Why there is one within thee, even thine owne conscience, will tell thee the contrary. Some knowledge of a judgement to come is implanted in nature: the very heathen in the darkenesse of nature had some glimmering light of it, and therefore set up *Minos, Radamantus, and Aeacus*, as Iudges in hell.

And hence it is, that even meere naturall and carnall men, though they sinne in a corner, no eye of man looking upon them, yet they tremble and are afraid, and the word of God is pregnant and plentiful to this purpose, and it hath often sounded in our eares, and therefore thou canst not pleade ignorance, that thou knowest it not, and yet will not thy knowledge of the truth of this argument (thou knowing it to be true from the light of nature, and from the word of God) worke on thee, and dissuade thee from thy sinne? Oh then thou must needs confesse thou hast a most hard and benumbed heart, and that is the greatest plague that can befall any in this life, that is greater than the ten plagues of *Egypt*, and therefore now take notice of thy fearefull condition, and with speed hasten out of it, and take this with thee, and thinke on it, if thy knowledge of this truth that there is a Lord above, and a Judge of all the world, who will one day bring thee to judgement for thy sinne, doe not now prevaile with thee to dissuade thee from thy sinne, thou shalt one day finde & feelee the truth of it, yea, thou shalt feelee the waight of his wrath to thy eternall woe and confusion for ever.

The Apostle addes (*in heaven*) a master in heaven (that is) a most glorious, mighty, and powerfull master.

Hence it is cleare: That Masters and all Superiours have a most mighty and powerfull Lord and Master over them, therefore they are to serve him in feare, and to rejoyce unto him with reverence, *Psal. 2. 11.* and to feare the stroke of his hand; it must needs be an heave stroke that comes from the highest heavens. The greatest man in the world can fetch his blow but from his head; his crowne, his power and authority, which is onely to kill the body; but the stroke of the Lords hand comes downe from heaven, yea, from above all heavens, and if it light on thee it kills both body and soule, it strikes thee downe to hell, and therefore take heed of it.

Note we in a word thus much further, that the Lord is said to be in heaven, not because he is there circumscribed, but because he is most mighty and powerfull. Hereby is met with the foolish opinion of some blind people, who thinke that God sits in heaven like an old man, with a Crowne on his head, and a Scepter in his hand: and this must teach us, when we come before the Lord, to pray unto him, to heare his word, or the like, to come with all reverence and feare

Doct. 5.
Masters and all
Superiours
have a most
mighty and
powerfull
Lord and ma-
ster over them.

Vse.
They are to
serve that Lord
in feare.
How the Lord
is said to bee
in heaven.
The foolish
opinion of ig-
norant people
met withall.

Note.

feare, this is the argument of the Preacher, Eccl. 5. 1. *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in the heavens and thou art on the earth, let thy words be few.* We must take heed of lightnesse and unseemly behaviour in the presence of God.

Verf. 2. *Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.*

I Have not yet laid forth the parts of this Chapter, though I have handled the first verse of it; because (indeed) the first verse of this Chapter belongs to foregoing matter, being a continuance of the Apostles exhortation to speciall duties that concerne Christians, and so rather to be referred to the former chapter than to this.

But now for the generall resolution of this Chapter, into the parts of it, leaving that verse as belonging to the third Chapter: know we that it contains in generall two things.

First, a regression, and a returne made by the Apostle, from speciall duties of Christians to generall, & that by way of exhortation, from the beginning of the second verse to the seventh.

Secondly, the conclusion of this whole Epistle from verse 7, to the end of the Chapter.

Now the conclusion contains in it these more speciall branches.

First, a declaration of the Apostles owne love, and care of the Colossians, by sending certaine messengers unto them, vers. 7, 8, 9.

Secondly, a declaration of the love of others towards them, both by their salutations sent to them, and by their prayers for them, in the 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

Thirdly, a setting downe of some speciall things the Apostle willed the Colossians to doe, and should cause to be done, both to the Church of *Laodicea*, and to some particular persons, in the 15, 16, 17 verses.

And lastly, the shutting up of the Epistle with the Apostles owne salutation, and his prayer to God for them, with a short precept interlaced betweene these two things, vers. 18.

Now then the first generall (as we said) is a regression, a turning from speciall to generall duties, the Apostle exhorting thereunto in the 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, verses, and his exhortation is twofold, and may thus be branched out.

First, an exhortation to prayer and thanksgiving in the 2, 3, 4, verses.

Secondly, to a wise carriage and behaviour towards them that are without, in the 5 and 6 verses.

For the first of these, the Apostle doth exhort to prayer and thanksgiving, both for themselves and for others generally, vers. 2. and then also for him and *Timothy* in particular, expressing what he would have them to aske of God for them, in vers. 3, 4.

Come we then to his generall exhortation in the second verse, (*Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.*) Where we have the Apostles exhortation to prayer, not barely propounded, but amplified by two qualities which he requireth by prayer, namely, continuance and watchfulnesse: he exhorts to prayer, and that continuall and earnest; (*Continue in prayer, and watch in the same*) and then to joyne to prayer thanksgiving.

Continue, that is, goe on, persevere; and be incessant (*in prayer*) The word translated prayer, in this place doth properly signifie adoration, or an humble entreaty for any thing at the feete of another, when a man doth prostrate and humble himselfe at the feet of another, and intreat for some thing at his hands, and so this word is here to be taken in a large sence and signification (namely) for any humble and holy request made and offered up to God by faith in the name of Christ, for things needfull, either for our selves, or others; the word

The parts of
this Chapter.

1

2

The conclusion
of this Epistle
subdivided.

1

2

3

4

The first gene-
rall parts of
this Chapter
subdivided.

1

2

Interpre-
tation.

(prayer) in this place, is to be taken as comprehending under it both request made to God, for good things for our selves, properly called petition: and request made for the avoyding, or removing of evill from our selves, called supplication, or deprecation: and also request made for the good of others, or the turning away of evill from others, called intercession, as they are distinguished by the Apostle, 1. Tim. 2. 1. *I exhort therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.*

(And watch in the same) The meaning of these words is: and bee fervent in that holy exercise of prayer, let it bee performed of you with earnest intention of soule and body: for watchfulnesse (as wee know) is opposed to drowinesse and sleepinesse: and so here, being applied to prayer, it is opposed to a cold, carelesse, drowie, and sluggish performance of that duty: (*with thanks giving*) that is, with returning praise, and thanks to God for good things received, whether they be obtained by your requests, or freely bestowed upon you, without, or above your supplication.

Thus then conceive wee the meaning of the Apostle in the words of this verse, as if hee had said: Persevere, and bee incessant in making and offering up to God by faith, in the name of Christ, humble, and holy requests for things needfull, both for your selves and others, and be fervent in that holy exercise, performing it, with earnest intention, both of heart, minde, and body, and returne praise for good things received, whether they be given you upon your request, or freely bestowed upon you, without, or above your supplications.

Wee are here to marke, that our Apostle having layd before the Colossians, many excellent duties, both generall and speciall, both common to all Christians, and proper to some in their particular state and condition of life, he now exhorts them to prayer.

Doff. 1.

Our lesson hence is this: Although teaching and exhortation bee singular and notable meanes to frame us to godlinesse and righteousness of life, yet ought prayer also to be adjoynd to them.

It is not sufficient to be informed what duties concerne us both in generall and particular, and to be stirred up to the practice of them: but to that information and incitement prayer must be added.

Reason.

It is not enough for us to heare, and to be enformed of duties that concerne us, both as we are Christians, and in our particular states and conditions of life, and to bee stirred up to the practice of them: but to that information and incitement, prayer must be added, both publike and private: for why? as the Apostle saith, 1. Cor. 3. 6. *I have planted, Apollos watered, but God giveth the increase: so then neither is he that planteth, any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.* Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase, and at his hand it must be sought for, by earnest prayer: the Lord that hath promised a blessing to his ordinance, hath appoynted prayer to bee the meanes to draw it downe to us, and having commanded us to heare him speaking to us in his word, he hath appointed that we should seeke to him in prayer, to make his word effectuell unto us.

And the reason of this, is that we finde 1. Cor. chap. 2. vers. 10. it is onely the spirit of God, which searcheth the deepe things of God, and as no man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him: so no man knowes the things of God, but the Spirit of God: no man knowes the meaning of the Lord in his Word, unlesse the Lord give him his spirit, to open and declare it to him. The outward teaching by the Word must bee seconded by the inward teaching of the Spirit of God, otherwise it will be unprofitable, yea hurtfull, and a favour of death to death: yea, though the spirit of God doe enlighten the minde, and give understanding of the comforts of the Word, (as hee doth sometimes, even to the wicked men and reprobates) yet if hee worke not further than that, there is no faith in the heart to beleeeve those comforts with comfort.

And

And though the ſpirit give knowledge of duties that chide men both in generall and ſpeciall; yet if he doe not alſo bend the will and affections, and frame the whole man to an holy obedience, certainly there will followe no conſonable practice of thoſe duties.

Now the ſpirit is to bee ſought for by prayer: and ſo the prayer of faith the promiſe is made, that by it we ſhall obtaine the holy Ghoſt, *Luke 11.13. If ye which are evil can give good gifts unto your children, how much more ſhall your heavenly father give the holy Ghoſt to them that deſire him?* And therefore (doubtleſſe) to teaching and exhortation out of the word, that they may be effectually, prayer muſt be added, both publike and private.

This thea (for the uſe of it) gives me juſt occaſion to reprove many perſons who have no manner of care nor conſcience in them of this duty; many there be, who are ſo farre from adding prayer to that which they have heard taught, and to which they have bene exhorted out of the word of God, as they never ſo much as once thinke on things delivered: if once they get out of the Church, the things ſpoken, are to them as though they had never heard them: They ſuffer the divell to ſteale the ſeed out of their hearts, and to take up their minds with other thoughts: yea, if (haply) ſome doe a little thinke or ſpeake of things they have heard, and will freely confeſſe, that *Paul* may plant, and *Apollos* may water, but God gives the increaſe. Yet where is (almoſt) the man or woman, that doe humble themſelves in prayer, and privately call on God to make the things they have heard profitable to them, and to worke in them faith and holy obedience? ſuch a man or woman is rare far to be found.

What? Doſt thou dreame of any ſtrength in thy ſelfe, to beleeve or to doe the things thou haſt heard out of the word of God? Art thou ſo unacquainted with the corruption of thine owne heart? that is a groſſe blindneſſe indeed, and if thou ſo thinke, thou ſhalt never doe any good duty made knowne to thee out of Gods word. Good duties are diſcovered to thee out of the word of God, that thou mayſt ſee thine owne weakneſſe and wants, and bewaile them, and humbly beſeech the Lord, as well to make thee obedient to his will, as to reveale to thee the rule of life.

And for want of this (becauſe men doe not adde private prayer to that which hath bene taught, and to which they have bene exhorted) it comes to paſſe that the word is unfruitfull and unprofitable to them: though both generall and ſpeciall duties have bene laid before them, and they have bene ſtirred up to the practice of them, yet moſt men are ſtill in their ſinnes, and as unreformed as ever they were, and here is the cauſe of it: to teaching and ſtirring up to their duties, they never added prayer, they never humbly beſought the Lord, as he had outwardly taught them their duties by preaching, ſo hee would inwardly teach them by his holy ſpirit, and worke in them a conſcience of their duties.

Well, conſider (I beſeech you) it is a fearefull thing, when the holy ordinances of God have no power with us, when they are not effectually to our good, and that comes to paſſe for want of carrefull prayer to God, as well in private as in publike, for a bleſſing upon them. Yea, hence it is, that oftentimes the Lord doth poure downe a curſe upon men, and they are made worſe by the holy things which they heard; and therefore learne we ever hereafter, to teaching and exhortation to adde prayer.

Yea, let ſuch as make conſcience to meditate and conſerre on the word heard, joyne to their meditation and conference, earneſt and hearty prayer: it was *Dauids* practice to meditate in the Law of God continually, *Pſalm 119. verſ. 97.* And that he ſanctified his meditation by prayer, it is cleare, *Pſalm 119. 13. Let the meditation of mine heart be acceptable in thy ſight, O Lord my ſtrength and my redeemer:* and therefore thinke not becauſe thou art a man fearing God

Vſe.

Reproble of them who adde not prayer to their hearing of the word of God.

God, and thou makest conscience to meditate on the word heard, and thou dost rightly conceive of things delivered; therefore thou needest not adde prayer to thy meditation: no, nor the more godly thou art, the more need hast thou to pray, because Satan will be busiest against thee, and thou art the readiest to be puffed up with a conceit of thy knowledge and remembrance of holy things: therefore doe not thou forget to joine to thy hearing, to thy meditation and conference, earnest and humble prayer.

Now touching the Apostles exhortation to prayer, much might be said of prayer in generall: but I hold that not so pertinent to the purpose of the Apostle, I will speake of the qualities required to be in prayer.

Deh. 2. 15.
We are to continue and persevere in prayer.

First therefore, the Apostle requires continuance and perseverance in prayer, that we continue and persevere in calling on the Name of the Lord in prayer, and pray continually, and this the Scripture much exhorteth unto, *1. Thessa. 5. vers. 17. Pray continually: Ephesians 6. 18. Pray alwaies with all manner of prayer and supplication in the spirit; Luk. 18. vers. 1. Our Saviour spake a Parable unto them, to this end, that they ought alwaies to pray, and not to waxe faint; and this I might further prove by many examples, and make it cleare that wee are not to thinke the exercise of prayer, needlesse or unseasonable at any time.*

Reason.

The reason is plaine, prayer is to bee used as oft as occasion is offered, now, all times, minister occasion of prayer: for what is it wherein wee ought not to pray that the Lords name may be sanctified, his kingdome erected, his will performed, our necessities supplied, our sinnes remitted, we supported in temptation and delivered from evill? And if we have all things that heart can wish, belonging both to body and soule, yet we have need to crave Gods blessing on them, that they may doe us good. All times therefore ministering occasion of prayer, we are to pray continually.

Object.

If this be so, may some say, then no time is to be given to the preservation of life, and to follow the workes of our callings: this was the error of some very ancient.

Ans.

To answer it, so as we may avoyd this error, and yet preserve the true meaning of the Scripture, know we that the exercise of prayer is two-fold: ordinary, and extraordinary.

Ordinary, to bee used daily: Extraordinary, at some times, as occasions require, as for avoyding or removing of some great affliction, or heavy iudgement, or the obtaining of some needfull grace or temporall blessing: and for the performance of this, a man may for a time omit the workes of his calling, and give himselfe wholly to prayer: but ordinary prayer, that may stand with the performance of all duties belonging to a mans calling: a man may both serve God by ordinary prayer, and that continually, and doe whatsoever his calling (though it be most laborious) doth require.

And that this may be conceived, know we further, that ordinary prayer is either set and solemne, in ample manner to be performed, and that upon set and certaine occasions, as at the beginning of our works, at the receiving of the creatures of God, at our going to rest at the night: or it is sudden and short, called ejaculation of heart, that is, a secret and sudden lifting up the heart upon any occasion: and this kinde of ordinary prayer may be used in the midst of necessary businesse, it doth neither hinder it, nor is hindred by it.

Thus we see how wee may pray continually, either by set, or by sudden prayer, and yet not omit the duties of our callings, nor the preservation of life.

Now then to perswade to this duty, to which wee are hardly drawne: and hence it is that some pray onely by fits and starts, onely in time of some affliction, when the hand of God is on them, or when their consciences are a little touched

touch'd with the point of the spirituall sword; the word of God, and some there be, who heretofore have used prayer in their houses, and now have either altogether left off that exercise, or seldome use it, and so indeed shew themselves to be hypocrites. It doth so brand them, *Job 37. 10.* Will the hypocrite call upon God at all times, or continually? as if he had said, certainly no, he will not.

Now then to perswade us to the practice of this duty, consider the necessity of it, and the sweet and comfortable fruites of it.

For the necessity of it, to passe by our owne wants of body and soule, which (if wee feele) will bring us on our knees: there is a necessity lying upon us in regard of Gods Commandements; prayer being a speciall branch of his worship required in his Word: and his Will is, that his Commandements should be as well kept as any other, and condemnation will befall us, as well for the neglect of this, as of any other. And for the fruites of prayer, they are many and great. Prayer as a meanes (not as a meritorious cause, nor by merit and worthinesse in it selfe, but by faith in the promise) as a meanes (I say) it obtaynes remission of sinnes; it turnes away all evils as punishments, and supplies all wants, it doth sanctifie and give us an holy use of all the good things wee enjoy, and without which we are usurpers, and doe wickedly abuse Gods blessings. For all things are sanctified to our use by the word and prayer. *1. Tim. 4. 5.* Yea further, prayer gives strength to faith, hope, and other graces of Gods spirit. And it is impossible (saith one) that either that Christian who is diligent in prayer, should bee weake in faith and other graces: or that graces should abound where there is a neglect of prayer. *Mark. 14. 19.* Watch and pray (saith Christ) that ye enter not into temptation, as if he had said: Be vigilant and careful in the performance of this duty, that you may bee strong in faith, able to quench the fiery darts of the divell, and to withstand the force of temptation to sinne.

And hence it is that one saith: Pray, and sinne if thou canst: noting how speciall a preservative prayer is against temptation. If in time of temptation, we fly to God in the prayer of faith, for strength and assistance, we shall either have the temptation removed, or receive the answer made to *Paul, 2. Cor. 12. 9.* My grace is sufficient for thee.

Oh then seeing such precious fruites come from prayer, let us be stirred up to a continuall use of it, and to hold on a constant and continuall course in the practice of it, not onely publickly in the congregation, but privately in our houses, with our families, that so we may become familiar, and as it were better acquainted with the Lord: for in prayer we have some familiar fellowship with God. Let us therefore have recourse to the Lord by prayer, that by it, as a meanes, we may attaine pardon of sinne, freedome from all evils, supply of all wants, and further strength and encrease of all graces.

We are to take notice of one thing further, comprized under this first quality of continuance and perseverance in prayer; for indeed the word here rendered (*continues*) signifieth not onely continuance in regard of time, but instantency and importunity: and it is so translated by some, and that truly, *be instant in prayer.*

So that hence we are taught: that we must not onely pray continually in regard of time, but we must be constant and importunate with the Lord in prayer with an honest instantency and importunity: we must not onely hold on a constant and continued course in prayer, but wee must also sollicite the Lord often, for the same things: if our requests bee not granted, we must pray for the same needfull things againe and againe, till the Lord answer us graciously, heare our prayers, have mercy, and helpe us with such things as wee crave at his hands, or something proportionable: and this our Saviour hath taught

starts, and of such as either breake off the use of that exercise, or seldome use it.

Two motives to stirre us up to continuance and perseverance in prayer.

The excellent fruites of prayer.

Dut. 3.
We must after an holy manner be instant and importunate with God in prayer.

caught us by the example of a man that comes to borrow bread of his friend at midnight, Luk. 11. 8. I say unto you, though he would not arise, and give him because hee is his friend, yet doubtlesse, because of his importunity, hee would rise and give him as many as he needed. So saith Christ, Aske and it shall be given you, not onely aske, but seeke, neither there rest, but knocke and this also is taught by the parable of the widdow and wicked Judge, who feared not God, nor reverenced man, Luk. 18. 15. And the reasons, why we must be importune in prayer, and after an holy manner importunate, and even bold, comen to God, asking and craving the same needfull things (as yet not granted) againe and againe, are two,

Reason 1.

First, to shew our earnest and hearty desire of such things we pray for, coming from a true inward feeling of the want of them, that we heartily desire them as things most profitable and good for us, and therefore will not suffer the Lord (as it were) to rest till he grant them unto us.

Reason 2.

Secondly, to shew our patient dependance on Gods good pleasure, that wee believe the promises of God, not onely touching the substance of them, but also in regard of the circumstance of time, that wee waite and depend on the Lord, not onely in the matter of his promise, but also in respect of his owne good time appointed for the accomplishment of it, and that we are not such, as if we be not heard at the first, will fling away into a chafe, as men use, who having received repulse and deniall, say they will never open their mouths more in the matter, they will not be so much beholding to them to whom they sue, that we may shew our selves sure from this impatient behaviour, and that we are not such as prescribe when the Lord shall heare and grant our requests, but that we in patience depend upon him, wee must (our lawfull requests being not yet granted) still continue to sollicite and importune the Lord in our prayers.

U^r.

Reproofe of them who either prescribe to the Lord, when he shall heare their prayers, or are impatient if their requests be not speedily granted.

Note.

Gods children are sometimes impatient, if the Lord deferre to grant their requests.

Many there be who are justly taxed as failing in this duty. Some there be that will prescribe to the Lord when he shall heare them, and are impatient of any delay: yea, bethere not some, who, if the Lord doe not heare them, nor answer them according to their desire, after once or twice calling upon him, and asking of some needfull thing at his hands, even secretly shrinke from the Lord, and say in their hearts, as the King of Israels messenger said, 2. King. 6. 32. Should I attend on the Lord any longer? Their practice shewes it plainly, for let the hand of God be upon them, and let them be under affliction, in their bodies, children, or goods, and what doe they? Haply at the first they sue and sue to the Lord by prayer themselves, and desire others to pray for them: but if comfort and deliverance come not when they would have it, doe they still continue seeking and suing to the Lord? Are they importunate suiters in patience waiting for the Lords answer? Nothing lesse. They fall from seeking to the Lord, even to seeke to the diuell and his instruments, to Witches, Wizards, and such like: Surely such persons shew they have no true faith in the promise of God, they trust not God on his word for comfort in this life, and it is certaine (I say what they will) they trust him not for comfort in the life to come, and for the salvation of their soules: yea, even the deare children of God, doe sometimes faile in this duty, and shew their infirmity in this kinde, when they lying under some great affliction poure out their suites to the Lord for ease, comfort and deliverance, and the Lord seemes to have a deafe care, and after some good space of time, their requests are not granted, what shall ye heare sometimes from them? Surely this, or the like speech, favouring too much of their owne weakness. Alas, I have many times called on God, and made my humble suite unto him for comfort, but as yet I finde none, or the Lord seemes to hide his face from me: and as the Prophet saith, Lament. chap. 3. vers. 8. When I cry and shout, he shuts out my prayer. What would you have me to doe? Shall I still continue praying? I feare me, the Lord is angry with me, Thus doe the deare children of

of God sometimes discover their weaknesse. And we must learne to strengthen our selves against it, and if thy lawfull request be not granted after many times calling upon God, yet doe thou still persist in prayer, and comfort thy selfe with the consideration of these things.

First know, that the Lords delay to grant thy request, is not a token of his anger: if so be he give thee perseverance in prayer, if the Lord give thee grace still to persist in prayer, and still to sue to him, he deferring to grant thy request, that perseverance is a more excellent gift and greater mercy, than the thing thou suest for, it is exceeding pleasing to the Lord.

Againe, consider it is the Lords manner, many times to deferre to grant the request of his children, and that for the speciall good of his children.

As first, that by deferring hee may try their hope, and exercise their faith, that he may see whether they thorowly beleave his promise, and will depend on his goodnesse, even then when he seemes to hide his face from them: thus dealt Christ with the Canaanitish woman, *Matth. 15. chap. from 22 verse to the 28.*

First, she cried, *Have mercy on me oh Lord, the sonne of David, my daughter is miserably vexed with a devill*: he answered not a word, made as though hee heard not.

Secondly, his Disciples besought him for her: then hee answered (cutting them short) *He was not sent but to the lost sheepe of the house of Israel.* Yet shee came againe and worshipped him, and said, *Lord helpe me.* he repelled her againe with this; *It is not good to take the childrens bread, and to cast it to whelpes*: hee calld her dog, a bitter repulse, yet she still persisted in prayer; and then he answers, *O woman great is thy faith, be it unto thee as thou desirest.*

Secondly, the Lord sometimes deferreth to grant gifts sought by prayer, that when they are given, they may be more welcome to us.

Thirdly, that his benefits should be esteemed of, more reverently, and not regarded as things of course.

And last of all, that our fervency in prayer might increase.

Thus the Lord dealt with *Moses, Exod. 32.* The Lord purposed to spare his people, and not to destroy them, yet when *Moses* prayed for them he seemed not to regard his prayer: nay, hee said to him, *vers. 10. Let me alone that my wrath may waxe hot against them, for I will consume them.* This was to enflame the affection of *Moses*, to make him more instant for the safety of the people, as (indeed) hee was, *verse 11. O Lord (saith he) why doth thy wrath waxe hot against thy people which thou hast brought out of the Land of Egypt.*

Thus we see, that repulse must not discourage us from perseverance and importunity in prayer: no, no, if thy lawfull request be not granted after many times praying, know it is for one of these causes before spoken of: and withall remember, if the Lord give thee grace to persevere in prayer he deferring to grant thy request: that is a more excellent gift than the thing thou suest for, and exceeding pleasing to God. And therefore let not thine owne corruption prevaile with thee, and cause thee to cease calling on God: because he seemes not to heare thee for a time, thinke not that the Lord is therefore angry with thee, that is but thine owne weakenesse: still persist in prayer, and the Lord in his appointed time will heare thee, and give thee that thou callest for, or some thing proportionable, even that which shall be most for his glory, and thine owne comfort.

Come we to the second quality here required in prayer (*watch in the same.*)

The second thing our Apostle requires in prayer, is watchfulnesse, (that is) fervency. That the holy exercise of prayer be performed with earnest intention of heart, minde and body: it is not enough that we pray, and that wee

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continue

2. Things are to be considered to make us instant and importunate with God in prayer.

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4 Reasons why the Lord doth deferre to grant the requests of his children.

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Doct. 4.
We must be fervent in prayer, and

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earnest inten-
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Note.

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prayers lip-la-
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continue and perſevere in prayer, unleſſe wee bee alſo watchfull and ſervent in prayer, and therefore our Apoſtle here joynes theſe two together, *Continue in prayer and watch in the ſame*: So likewiſe *Ephes. 6. 18.* requiring that we ſhould uſe our Spirituall armour with all prayer & ſupplication upon all occaſions, in, or by the Spirit, he addeth, and watching thereunto with all perſeverance and ſupplication. And *1 Pet. 4. 7.* ſaith the Apoſtle, *Be ye therefore ſober and watching in prayer*; and that prayer muſt be ſervent.

The reaſon and ground of it, is the Commandement of God; who hath enjoyned us to feare, love and ſerve him, with all our heart, ſoule, and ſtrength, hee requires vehemency and fervency in all duties both towards himſelfe and towards men: therefore prayer being an excellent ſervice of God, it ought to bee ſervent, and to bee powred out with earnest intention, both of ſoule and body. Hence it is called, a powring out of the ſoule; *1 Sam. 1. 15.* and of the heart, *Pſal. 42. 4.* And indeed the heart and inward ſoule is the chiefe ſeate of fervencie in prayer, howſoever fervency in prayer, be for the moſt part expreſſed by outward ſignes and geſtures of the body, as by ſhedding of teares, by lowdnes of voice, by bowing or proſtrating of the body, by liſting up the hands, eyes, and ſuch like: yet ſometimes, no doubt there may be a ſervent prayer made to God, where theſe ſignes and geſtures are wanting: as in caſe of extreame weakneſſe of body, when the body through rage, or extremity of ſickneſſe is exceedingly weakened, the ſenſes decayed, ſpeech taken away; ſo that the heart and the minde are the chiefe ſeate of fervency in prayer, they eſpecially are to be carried to a quicke and ready performance of the duty of prayer, and to be watchfull & attentive in it, yet ſo (as out of the caſe before ſpecified) that fervency bee expreſſed, by outward ſignes and geſtures of the body: the exerciſe of prayer muſt be performed with earnest intention both of ſoule and body.

Here then I might juſtly taxe many popiſh prayers, as lip-labour and diſpleaſing to God, as their prayer in an unknowne tongue, their numbring of prayers on their beades uttered without any ſincere affection of the heart, and their mumbling up their prayers in their canonicall houres, &c. But I leave them, and come to our ſelves. Is it ſo, that prayer muſt be ſervent, and that the holy exerciſe of invocation muſt be performed with earnest intention of the ſoule and body?

What then ſhall we ſay of ſuch as have no ſooner kneeled downe and liſted up their hands and eyes towards heaven (and ſome doe ſcarcely ſo much) but forthwith, as if they were aſleepe, or in a heaviſe ſlumber, they have forgotten before whom they have preſented themſelves, and what is the thing they have in hand. Others having begunne well, by and by forget themſelves, and ſuffer their drowſie minds to be carried to ſome other thing, and as if they were in a ſlumber ſpeake many times they know not what, or at leaſt they conſider not what. And doe not many come before the Lord, both in publique and private, and call on him onely of cuſtome, and for faſhion ſake, and ſo utter out a cold and ſluggiſh prayer? Theſe things are too common amongſt men.

Well, I beſeech you to conſider things aright: would any man thus behave himſelfe in making his petition to a Prince, a mortall man, and that for truth and tranſitory things? Surely, if he had any underſtanding in him, hee would not: and ſhall we then be ſo heaviſe and drowſie, ſo cold and careleſſe in ſupplicating, and making petition to the King of Kings, for things of greateſt waight and moment? Doe wee thinke to obtaine any mercy or good things at the hands of God by a ſluggiſh and drowſie prayer, uttered with yawning, halfe ſleeping and halfe waking? No certainly, we ſhall not. As the prayer of faith (if it be ſervent) is an excellent ſervice to God, and exceeding pleaſing to him, and of greate force to bring downe many bleſſings from the Lord, *1 Jam. 5. 16.*

So

So on the other side, cold, sluggish, and drowsie prayer, and a prayer onely of cawne and fashion, cannot please but be highly displeasing to the Lord; and a meanes to pull downe his curse; for the more excellent the service is, and the more acceptable to God, the more shamefull a thing it is; and the more displeasing to God, to performe it slothfully and drowsily: and therefore take heed thou doe not so performe it. Labour thou to be fervent in prayer and to put up thy supplications and suites to the Lord with earnest intencion of soule and body.

And to that end use helpe: as thou wouldest use meanes to keepe the body waking, if thou wert to attend some waigory businesse in the night: so in the holy businesse of prayer, use meanes to keepe thy minde and heart waking, that they may be watchfull and earnestly intend that businesse.

And to that purpose; First, call to mind and remember before whom thou dost present thy selfe in prayer, even before that great and glorious majesty, the Lord, before whom the Angels cover their faces, *Isai. 6. 3.*

Secondly, bring with thee a feeling of thy wants, even those things thou prayest for.

And thirdly, feare just repulse, that the Lord may justly shut out thy prayers in respect of thy cold and carelesse calling upon him.

And if thou carefully use these, and the like helpe doublelesse thou shalt finde them excellent meanes to rowle thee up in prayer, and to quicken thee to a fervent calling upon the Lord, and to make thy heart and minde earnestly intent on that holy businesse, and then thy prayer will be a meanes of many blessings, and much comfort unto thee.

The Apostle addes (*with thanksgiving*) I speake of the point of thanksgiving *cap. 3. 17.* and therefore will not now stand upon it, onely note we, that the Apostle would have prayer and thanksgiving joyned together. He saith not, *Continue in prayer, and watch in the same, and give thanks,* as if they were things to be done at severall times, *but continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.*

Hence we may gather thus much: that even then when we have cause to pray, we have also cause to blisse the Lord, and to praise him. When wee are under some crosse or affliction, and have cause to call on the Lord for ease, and comfort and deliverance: even then also, have wee cause to open our mouthes to magnifie and praise the name of the Lord. And hence it is that our Apostle, *1. Thes. 5. 18.* exhorts us to give thanks in all things.

It is a common corruption amongst men, that the feeling of some present evil and affliction it steals from them the remembrance of other mercies and blessings, and it sealeth up their mouthes that they cannot blisse the Lord for them as they ought; let a man have cause to blisse God for many good things; yet if he bee crossed in any one thing: that crosse commonly takes away the remembrance of these good things, and he forgets to blisse the Lord for them.

This is a great corruption, we must learne to avoide it, and know, that even then, when we (lying under the hand of God) have cause to pray for ease, comfort, and deliverance.

We have also cause to give thanks to the Lord, for many good things: for (haply) in thy affliction the Lord gives thee patience, and inward comfort, and this is certaine, that in thy affliction that befallies thee, the Lord deales not with thee according to thy deserts, for he might plunge thee into the pit of hell for thy sinnes, and if he mitigate of that justice, and more easily correct thee, thanke him and blisse his name for that mercy, and bee not onely fervent in craving ease and comfort at his hands, in time of thy affliction, but at the same time remember (as thou hast just cause) to be also as forward in giving thanks to the Lord for mercies received.

3. Things
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Doct. 5.
When we have
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Verſe. 3. *Praying alſo for us, that God may open unto us the doore of utterance, to ſpeake the myſtery of Chriſt. Wherefore I am alſo in bonds.*

IN this verſe our Apoſtle comes to exhort the Coloſſians to pray for him and Timothy in particular, and requeſteth them (together with themſelves) to remember him and Timothy in their prayers (*praying alſo for us*) and then he expreſſeth what hee would have them to aſke of God for them, namely the gift of ſpeech and utterance, under the borrowed and metaphoricall ſpeech, in theſe words (*that God may open unto us the doore of utterance*) and withall hee ſets downe for what purpoſe they would have the gift of utterance beſtowed on them, even for the publiſhing and declaring of the Goſpell, which (by way of commendation) the Apoſtle calls the myſtery of Chriſt (*to ſpeake the myſtery of Chriſt*) and hee further ſhewes the excellency of the Goſpell, by his ſufferings for it; that for the Goſpels ſake, he doubted not to expoſe himſelfe to trouble, and was in bonds for it (*Wherefore I am alſo in bonds*) and then he further requires their prayers for himſelfe more eſpecially, that ſuch a gift of utterance might be given unto him as was fit for the publiſhing of the Goſpell, both in regard of the excellency therof, and of the ſpeciall truſt of Apoſtleſhip committed to him, verſ. 4. *That I may utter it as it becometh me to ſpeake.* Theſe are the generall things contained in theſe two verſes.

Come we to ſpeake of them in order.

And firſt the Apoſtles requeſt made to the Coloſſians comes to be conſidered. He requeſting their prayers for himſelfe, and Timothy (*praying alſo for us*). There is no hardneſſe in the words, for the ſenſe of them: the meaning of them is this: Remember me and Timothy, together with your ſelves in your prayers, commending your ſelves to the Lord in your holy petitions and applications, and us alſo all together with your ſelves.

Now then wee are firſt to marke and conſider that our Apoſtle (requeſting the prayers of the Coloſſians for him and Timothy) did thereby ſignifie that he and Timothy ſtood in need of their prayers: and what was he and Timothy? ſurely men endued with a great meaſure of knowledge and grace, and men of excellent gifts. Paul (no doubt) a choſen veſſell of God. *Act. chap. 9. verſ. 15.* was a man of rare gifts, and adorned with excellent knowledge, wiſedome, courage, humility, and many other worthy graces of Gods Spirit; and of Timothy he witneſſeth, *1. Timoth. chap. 3. verſ. 14. 15.* that he had knowne the Scriptures of a child, and was perſwaded of the things he had learned of him; yet theſe men requeſt the prayers of the Coloſſians, and thereby imply, that their prayers were indeed needfull for them, and that they ſtood in need of their prayers.

Doct. 1.

The beſt and the moſt holy hath need of the prayers of others.

Hence then we are taught thus much, that even the beſt have need of the prayers of others; men that have the greateſt meaſure of ſanctification, knowledge, and gifts, and are in great favour with the Lord, notwithstanding have need of the prayers of others for them. And hence it is that our Apoſtle not onely here, but in many other places doth requeſt the prayers of others for himſelf. *Rom. 15. 30.* he entreateth the Romans earneſtly, even for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt his ſake, & for the love of the Spirit, that they would ſtrive with him, by prayers to God for him. *Ephes. 6. 19.* hee deſires them of that Church that they would make ſupplication for all Saints, not onely for the weaker ſort, but alſo for the ſtrongeſt, and for him in particular, that utterance might be given unto him, that hee might open his mouth boldly, to publiſh the ſecret of the Goſpell. *2. Theſ. 3. 1.* Furthermore brethren (ſaith the Apoſtle) pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free paſſage, and be glorified as it is with you. Thus doth our Apoſtle often re commend himſelfe to the prayers of others, and thereby plainly ſhew

shew, that he conceived, and would have others to understand, that he stood in need of other mens prayers.

The reason why men of greatest gifts and grace, stand in need of other mens prayers are these.

First, because howsoever they have received much, yet they still want, not onely some graces that are found in others, but in the measure and degree of those which them selves have received, even those graces and good gifts they have received, may be further encreased, and therefore they stand in need of the prayers of others to that purpose.

Secondly, they are in danger through their owne corruption to swell, and to be lifted up above their brethren, in respect of their good gifts received, and therefore also have need of the prayers of others.

Thirdly, the diuell is most busie against them that are more eminent than others in grace and sanctification: hee labours by might and maine, to overthrow them, knowing well, that the fall of such commonly carries many others with it, and that God is more dishonoured by their fall, than by the fall of many others, and therefore even the best, and such as are endued with the greatest measure of grace, have need to bee helped by the prayers of others.

Let no man then thinke himselfe so excellent and so farre advanced above others in knowledge, or any grace whatsoever, as that he hath no need of other mens prayers: if any so thinke he deceives himselfe in his owne proude conceit, and his owne heart deceives him. If a man have the spirit of grace and prayer, and be able to pray for others and can boldly goe to the throne of grace, and his calling bee to pray for others, (he being a Minister) yet he must know that himselfe also hath need of other mens prayers: or it is not a matter of complement and forme onely for a Minister, and one that is endued with an excellent gift of prayer, sometimes to recommend himselfe to the prayers of the people: no, no, hee ought to doe it, hee must consider that the force of prayer is not from the dignity of the persons that make it, but from faith in the promise, and though they that pray for him, bee farre inferiour to him in knowledge, and other excellent gifts, yet being many, and joyned together in the prayer of faith, as one man, their prayers are of great force with the Lord: he hath made a gracious promise to them, *Matth. chap. 18. vers. 19, 20.* If two of you (saith our Saviour) shall agree in earth upon any thing, whatsoever they shall desire, it shall bee given them of my father which is in heaven.

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Acts 12. We finde that earnest prayer, being made by the Church to God for *Peter*, when he was imprisoned by *Herod*, the Lord sent his Angell, and delivered him: and therefore let none of us thinke it is a matter onely of forme, or a needlesse thing for a Minister, or one that hath excellent gifts, and haply a notable gift of prayer himselfe, to crave the prayers of others; he hath need so to doe, even in the time of his greatest strength, and in time of sicknesse, or some great danger he ought to require the assistance of others in prayer, and to put himselfe on the publicke prayers of the Church; and if the best, and such as are endued with excellent gifts, have need of other mens prayers, certainly, then they much more that are of meaner gifts, and have lesse measure of grace.

Now before wee come to the next point, it is not amisse to discover an error of the Papists. From this and the like places of Scripture, our adversaries the Papists would gather warrant for their invocation of Saints departed.

Reasons

2

3

Vse.

No man is to thinke himselfe so excellent in knowledge, or in any other grace as that he hath no need of other mens prayers.

Note

A popish argument for invocation of Saints departed.

Ans. to it.

Reply of the Papists.
Ans. to that reply.

Doff. 2.
The Minister and the people ought mutually to pray one for another.
Reason.

Vse.
We must not rest in seeing the wants of our Ministers,

And thus they reason: Saint *Paul* here and in other places desireth the prayers of others living on the face of the earth, and entreats them to pray for him: therefore (say they) much more may wee desire the prayers of Saints departed, and now in glory, and pray them to pray for us.

A weake and silly ground, it followeth not, that because we may request the living to pray for us, therefore wee may desire the dead and Saints departed so to doe: when wee answer them, that we have commandement, for one living man to pray for another, we finde expresse warrant in the word of God, that one living man may request the prayers of another, but no commandement nor warrant for us to desire the prayers of men departed.

What is their reply?

Forsooth (say they) we need no commandement to pray, or desire others to pray for us, but it is sufficient to know their credit with God and willingness to entreat for us, when they are therunto requested. See, I beseech you, how shamelesse these men are, in underpropping their bold and ungrounded assertions: when they can finde no warrant for them in the booke of God, then (forsooth) they sticke not to say, we need none, and they flie to other shifts and speculations of their owne: would a man thinke that a man of learning (as they will be counted) would ever breathe and publish such rotten stufte? why? themselves make invocation of Saints, a part of religious worship, and call it *deuotion*, yea they call on Saints departed, as mediators betweene God and themselves: and needs there no commandement nor expresse warrant out of the word for things so waighy? surely none, but men that care not what they utter, would avouch it; but it is an usuall thing with our adversaries thus to deale.

In the next place, we are to marke, that our Apostle having made knowne to the Colossians, that he alwaies prayed for them. Chap. 1. verse 3. Here he desireth them to pray for him, and for *Timothy*: hence wee may gather thus much.

That it is a mutuall and reciprocall duty, that ought to be yeilded from the Minister to the people, and from the people to the Minister, to pray one for another. As the Minister is bound to pray for the people, so againe are the people bound to pray for the Minister: and this is not onely cleare by the evidence of this text, but also from other places before cited, wherein the Apostle requires to be helped by the prayers of other Churches.

And indeed there is great reason why the people ought to pray for their Ministers, especially such as are faithfull: because such Ministers are the leaders of Gods people, that are in Armes against the prince of darknesse, and his instruments, the world without, and the flesh within, and in that regard, meet with many sharpe assaults: and the people are so deeply interested in them as that their fall is oftentimes the ruine of themselves, and the casting downe of the Ministers is the overthrow of the people. The Ministers are their shepherds, and if they bee smitten, the people are commonly like silly sheepe scattered abroad: they are as the watch-men to a Castle or City, and if they be either blinded or corrupted, the City or Castle may easily bee surprized by the enemy: by these and many other names of similitude given to Ministers in Scripture, every man may see what cause the people have to seeke to sustaine and strengthen them by their prayers, and that they ought to strive in prayer to God for them continually. We see then what we ought to doe touching this particular.

Let us duely consider it, and learne to put this duty in practice. Men sometimes complaine of the defects and wants that are found in those that serve in that waighy calling of the Ministry, but few there be, that seeke supply to their wants, and strength to their weaknesse by their often and fervent prayer

to God in their behalfe. No doubt thou mayst (if thou wilt be curious) spie many wants and imperfections in the best and most faithfull Ministers, and if thou so doe, rest not in seeing and complaining of them, but use thou some meanes which the Lord hath put in thy power for the redresse of them, and pray to the Lord that he would remove them, and give supply of that which is wanting, that is thy duty: and if thou be one that dost pray for the Minister, remember to pray for him chiefly for his workes sake, even in respect of the word of comfort hee brings to thee, (haply) many pray for the Minister in regard hee is a quiet man, and not contentious, and his outward carriage gives them contentment (which indeed are things commendable) and men are to blesse God for these things, and pray for a Minister endued with them, but looke that thou doe as the Apostle hath taught thee, 1. *Thes. 5. 13. Have the Minister in singular love for his workes sake*, and testifie thy love in praying for him, chiefly for his workes sake, and for the words sake; and pray thou that the Lord would more and more fit and enable him to the worke of his Ministry, and that the Lord would open his mouth to speake to thy profit and comfort; and know that it is one great cause that men finde no sweetnesse in the comforts delivered by the Minister, because they pray not for the Minister, that the Lord would open his mouth to speake to their comfort: and therefore doe thou (when thou comest to heare a faithfull Minister) pray to the Lord that hee would direct his heart, and open his mouth, that he may speake to thy good, and thy comfort: and take this as a sure rule.

The best way to finde comfort in our friends is to pray for them, so certainly the best way to finde comfort by the Minister, is to pray for him: and therefore be carefull to practice this duty, and pray to the Lord that he would more and more fit and enable his Minister to the worke of his calling: and that hee would give him strength courage and power, to stand against men and devells, that seeke by force and subtilty, to daunt and discourage him, or to drive him away, or to hold him backe from the faithfull discharge of his Ministry: and whensoever thou comest to heare him, lift up thy heart to the Lord for him, that the Lord would so guide his heart and tongue by his Spirit, that hee may speake to thy profit and comfort, and then doubtlesse thou shalt finde much good by his teaching.

Marke we further, that in this request of the Apostle, hee saith not barely praying for us, but, *praying also for us*, praying for us together with your owne selves. Here then we doe plainly see, that in praying for our selves, wee must remember others, as members of one and the same body with us: this point I have heretofore handled, and therefore I now onely name it.

And know we thus much briefly: In that the Apostle saith, *Praying for us together with your selves*; we may gather that he that will pray for another, must pray for himselfe, and he must be able to pray for himselfe: and if thou canst not pray for thy selfe, how canst thou pray for another?

Wicked, prophane, and loose persons, use it as a common argument, to perswade others to doe that which they request at their hands, that they will pray for them; doe this or that for me (say they) and I will pray for you, being indeed not able to pray for themselves with comfort: for as *Salomon* saith, *Prov. 28. 9. He that turneth away his care from bearing the law, even his prayer shall be abominable*. He that is hardened in his finnes, and willingly and wittingly turnes away his care from knowing or obeying the will of God, revealed in his word: he cannot pray for himselfe with comfort, his prayer doth incense the Lord to further wrath against himselfe, and how then can hee pray for another with comfort? doubtlesse he cannot: and therefore labour thou to be able to pray, and to put up the prayer of faith for thy selfe, otherwise never thinke that thou art able to pray for another.

but we must pray that the Lord would remove them, and make supplie of that which is wanting unto them

In what respect the people are to pray for their Minister.

Not.

Doct. 3.
He that will pray for another, must be able to pray for himselfe.

Use. 1.
Reproofes of such as promise to pray for others, being not able to pray for themselves.

Come

Come we to speake of the second generall thing laid downe in this verse, namely, the thing the Apostle did with the Colossians to aske and crave of the Lord in their prayers for him and Timothy, expressed in these words, *That God may open unto us the doore of utterance*: He entreateth the Colossians to pray for him and Timothy, and he tells them what he would have them to aske of God for them, namely this, *That God might open unto them the doore of utterance*.

That forme and phrase of speech (*the doore of utterance*) in this place is a Metaphoricall and borrowed speech used by way of similitude, wherein the Apostle compareth the mouth, the instrument of speech and utterance, unto a doore, or gate, of it selfe shut, which none is able to set open, but the Lord: indeed the word (*doore*) used Metaphorically, and by way of similitude, is sometimes put to signifie occasion, as Paul saith, 1. Cor. 16. vers. 9. *A great doore and effectfull is opened unto me*: that is, a great opportunity or occasion of preaching, and spreading of the Gospell is offered unto me: but here being put with the addition (*of utterance or speech*) we are to understand by it, the mouth, the instrument of speech, which is as the doore or passage of speech: and the opening of that doore, which is onely from the Lord, as the Apostle here saith, (*that God may open unto us the word of utterance*) doth imply two things.

First, a giving of a power and ability of speaking, and of utterance, all naturall impediments before removed and taken away: a faculty to speake and utter things without any impediment, and a giving of liberty of speech and utterance, without any outward let or hindrance.

Interpre-
tation.

Thus then we are to understand these words, as if the Apostle had said: Pray for me and Timotheus, that the Lord (who is onely able) would vouchsafe to set open our mouthes, that of themselves are shut, and not able to utter a word, and that he would make them as open gates and doores, through which, speech and utterance may passe: that our mouthes may bee able to speake and utter forth things without any naturall impediment, and that they may speake freely without any outward let or hindrance.

First, here consider we, what it is that the Apostle desired the Colossians to pray for, that the Lord would give to him and Timothy, namely this, that God would open to them the doore of utterance, that he would give them ability, and liberty of speech, and utterance to preach the Gospell of Christ: he desires them not to pray that the Lord would give them power to worke miracles, that they might be able to heale the sicke, or the like; but that they would pray that the doore of utterance might be opened to them.

Doff. 4.

A mouth able to utter forth the Gospell is absolutely needfull for the Lords Minister.

Hence then we may easily see: that an open doore of utterance, a mouth able to speake, and utter forth the secrets of the Gospell, is most needfull for the Lords Minister: yea, it is a thing of absolute necessity, without which none can be a good Minister. Let a man have never so much learning, and knowledge in his head, yet if he want ability, conveniently and with some grace to utter and expresse the same, he is not fit for that holy function, and for the service of the Ministry of the Gospell. *Malach. 2. 7.* The Prophet said in time of the old Testament, *That the Priests lips should preserve knowledge*, it should not be onely in his head, but in his lips, that they should seeke the law at his mouth, and his mouth should be able to utter it.

Reason. 1.

And he gives this reason of it: For he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts: and if that reason were then good, as doubtlesse it was: then must it needs be now much more a good reason to prove that the lips of the Minister of the Gospell ought to preserve knowledge, and that his mouth should bee able to utter forth the secrets of the Gospell, because he is the Ambassador of Christ, 2. Cor. 5. 20. And being the Ambassador of the Lord to his people, it followeth necessarily that he must be able and apt to deliver his ambassage unto them.

Againe,

Again, the people attains their faith ordinarily by hearing. *Rom. 10. 17.* Faith is by hearing, and therefore it must needs be, that the Minister must be able by speaking, to beget faith in them, and to confirme the same, as the Apostle speaks plainly, *verf. 14.* How shall they heare without a Preacher? without one to open and to utter forth to them the doctrine of the Gospell.

And hence it is, that the Apostle in the description of one that is to be chosen to that great office of the Ministry, requireth chiefly, that hee beapt to teach, *1 Tim. 3. 2.* It is then a cleare point, that an open doore of utterance, a mouth able to utter forth the secrets of the Gospell, is a thing more requisite, & ought to be found in some measure in every Minister of the Gospell.

How then can they be held sufficient Ministers of the Gospell, who are altogether destitute of the gift of utterance, are dumbe and cannot speake, and have no manner of ability to utter forth the secrets of the Gospell? Admit they have all the vertues and good properties that can commend man in the world besides, yet wanting this, they want that which is most needfull, yea absolutely needfull, without which they cannot be fit for the worke of the Ministry: yet many such have crept into that calling, and still lurke in the Church, and it being a matter of such great and absolute necessity to utter forth the secrets of the Gospell.

We for our parts, are to blesse God for his mercy towards any people, where wee see a Minister set over them that hath knowledge, and a competent gift of utterance, fit for the publishing of the Gospell, and conscience to use it, the Lord hath vifited that people with a speciall favour: and we are to pittie that people to whom the Lord hath denied that mercy, and suffered them to live under a Minister that hath no manner of ability that way: their case is pittifull indeed, for howsoever Christ hath done sufficient for the salvation of all the world, yet they want the ordinary meanes whereby the benefit of redemption might be applied to them, and so their case is lamentable: haply they see it not, and in that respect it is more pittifull, and wee are to put on tender bowels, and in pittie and compassion toward them, to pray to the Lord as our Saviour hath taught us, *Matth. 9. 38.* that he would send to them such workemen, as for knowledge, utterance, and other gifts are both fit, able, and willing also, to make knowne, and to open unto them the secrets and sweet comforts of the Gospell.

In the next place, in that the Apostle doth intreate the Colossians to pray for him and *Timothy*, that the Lord would set open their mouthes, and that hee would make them able to utter the secrets of the Gospell:

We are further taught: that God onely doth open the doore of utterance, he onely gives ability and liberty of speech; not onely the knowledge of holy things, and of the mysteries of Christ, but even words to utter them, is from the Lord.

Let a man have never so much knowledge, and bee as full of good matter, as was *Elihu*, *Job 32. 18.* Yet unlesse the Lord put words into his mouth, hee shall be dumbe and not able to utter it. *Exod. 4. 11. 12.* wee finde that *Moses* pleading his infirmity, and that he was not eloquent, but a man of slow speech, and slow of tongue, the Lord said unto him, *who hath given the mouth?* As if he had said, Dost thou not consider, that I onely give ability and power to speake, whom I will, and that I take it away at my pleasure? Therefore goe thy way, and I will be with thy mouth, and will teach thee what thou shalt say. *Psalme. 51. 14.* David intreating the Lord to deliver him from blood, he promiseth that his tongue should sing joyfully of his righteousness: yet in the next verse, as if he had forgot himselfe, and not said well, in saying, *My tongue shall sing joyfully of thy righteousness;* he makes his prayer to the Lord, that he would open his lips, that his mouth might speake to his praise. Plainly shewing,

Doct. 2.

Vf. 1.
Dumbe Ministers are insufficient Ministers of the Gospell.

Vf. 2.
We are to blesse God for giving a Minister to a people able and fit to publish the secrets of the Gospell, and to pittie them that want such a Minister.

Doct. 5.
God onely gives ability and liberty of speech.

Reason.

Confutation of
free will as the
Papists teach
it.

Vsa. 1.
A Minister of
the word that
knowes holy
things & hath
thought upon
them, must in-
treat the Lord
to enable him
to utter them.
A Minister of
the word being
not able to utter
the holy things
he hath studied
and thought
upon; unlesse
God give him
utterance,
much lesse can
others that are
no Ministers
be able to doe
it.

Object.

Answer.

ing, that though the Lord should, according to his request, give him the matter of praise and thanksgiving, and he should conceive it in his mind, yet put matter into his mouth: yet, unlesse the Lord did adde a further grace and mercy, even to open his lips, he should not be able to utter it.

And the reason of this is, that we finde, *Act. 17. 28. In the Lord we live, and have our being*: every motion of soule and body (as it is a motion) is from the Lord: without his helpe and assistance we are not able to move the least finger to the doing of any outward civill thing: and therefore much more doe we alone unloose the strings of our tongues, and give ability and liberty of speech to utter forth holy things, and the mysteries of the Gospel.

Hence I might take occasion to shew the error of the Papists, the patrons and defenders of free will, who teach a freedome of will, even in the will it selfe, and of it selfe in spirituall things: but if every motion of body and soule bee from the Lord, and we are not able to move any faculty of the one, or part of the other, but as we are helpe and assisted by the Lord: then there can bee no freedome of will, in the will it selfe, and by it selfe, in civill good things: indeed, we willingly acknowledge a liberty of will, to will spirituall good in the state of grace, after regeneration: yet not a liberty in the will it selfe, but by the continuall assisting grace of God; the will truly changed and renewed, hath freedome to will that which is good, yet not by it selfe, but by the continuall assistance of Gods grace.

Now is it so, that God onely doth open the doore of utterance, and that a man having never so much knowledge cannot utter it, unlesse God open his mouth? Surely then, the Minister of the word must not rest in his knowledge, and meditation, but he must humbly crave it of the Lord, that he may be able to utter the holy things he hath thought upon.

And here (by the way to touch it) if the Minister of the word cannot utter the holy things hee hath studied and thought upon, unlesse the Lord give him utterance; how then is it possible, that one being not a Minister, nor ever called to that office should bee able to utter them? How can one that comes from a manuary trade to preach (as it is sometimes among the Brownists) How (I pray you) can such a man thinke, that he shall bee able to utter holy things, and to speake as a Minister in a congregation, or in a meeting of Christians.

Object. The Lord can enable him so to speake.

I grant it, that is without question, the Lord can, but whether he will or no, thereof I make some doubt, and I have reason for it, because indeed, such an one doth thrust himselfe into an office to which he is not called, and therefore cannot pray to the Lord to open to him the doore of utterance, to speake as a Minister with any assurance to be heard.

Admit this (which haply will be further objected) that such a man hath the allowance of them that joyne with him, he thinkes himselfe able, and they allow him, and designe him to the office of teaching.

What then, is he therefore rightly called to that office? I doubt of that also, because hee cannot ordinarily have that ability, and those gifts that are necessary for the furnishing of an ordinary Minister of the Gospel, hee being brought up to a Mechanicall trade, and so wanting the helpe of Arts & tongues, cannot ordinarily have the gift of true Interpretation of Scripture, and right dividing of the word, in a publike meeting of Christians, which is a matter of great difficulty, and of the greatest learning. The Lord (if hee please) can give gifts extraordinarily: but (as one saith well) at the first coming of the Gospel, the Lord did stir up simple men extraordinarily, when the Verversities were the greatest enemies of Religion: but now having restored to us the play of Canaan, we must know that the date of extraordinary calling is expired, and therefore such a man as comes suddenly from a manuary trade to preach the word

word cannot looke that the Lord should open to him the doore of utterance to publish the secrets of the Gospell. No, no, a Minister of the Gospell, lawfully called, & fitted for that office, must crave it at the Lords hands, that he may be able to utter the secrets of the Gospell. *Proverbs 16. 1. The preparations of the heart are in man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.* The meaning is, that a man may have, as it were, whole armies of thoughts in his minde, and those (by long meditation) orderly disposed, yet the uttering of the minde is as God shall open his mouth: he cannot utter aright any part of that matter hee hath thought on, unlesse the Lord give him the gift of utterance, and at his hands it must be sought for.

Again, it is so, that God onely doth open the doore of utterance, and he onely gives ability and liberty of speech to his ministers? Then wee may easily conceive, where we are to seeke and sue for ability and liberty of speech, to the Ministers of the Gospell, even at the hands of the Lord by earnest and hearty prayer; who onely it is, that must give it, and withall it behooves us to take heed wee provoke not the Lord to shut up that doore of utterance: for as it is, *Revel. 3. 7. If he open, none can shut: and if he shut, none can open.* Now we by our finnes provoke the Lord to locke up the doore of utterance, even to take away, either ability or liberty of speech from his Ministers, when men walke not worthy the Gospell, *Phil. 1. 27.* They justly provoke the Lord, either to send foolish teachers, or to stop the mouthes of such as are wise and able to divide the word of God aright, and not to suffer them to speake any more in his name to them. If the Minister have the doore of utterance, and have his mouth opened to tell thee of thy finnes, and the danger of them, and thou hast not a doore of entrance, thou wilt not suffer the word to enter into thine heart, and to the worke in thee a reformation, but thou dost still please thy selfe in thy finnes, and in following the lusts of thine owne heart: what dost thou? surely provoke the Lord eyther by death, or some other way to silence the Minister, and to stop his mouth, therefore consider it: and if we desire ability and liberty of speech, to the Ministers of the Gospell, let us heartily and earnestly sue for it at the Lords hands, let us take heed we provoke him not by our finnes to take away these things from them: If wee humbly seeke for it, that the Lord would open the doore of utterance to his Ministers, and if wee open our owne hearts, and suffer the Word of God to enter into them, then (doubtlesse) where the doore is opened, the Lord will open it wider, and hold it open, maugre the malice of the divell and all the power of hell.

Note we one thing further: *Paul* (no doubt) had the doore of utterance opened to him: he had ability, and some liberty to utter the secrets of the Gospell, though he was a prisoner, as appears *Act 28. vers. 31.* and yet here he desired the Colossians to pray, that God would open unto him the doore of utterance.

Hence we may gather, that a man that hath the gift of utterance, ought (notwithstanding) to pray, and to desire others to pray for the continuance and increase of that gift, that the Lord would continue it to him, and more and more increase it.

If a man have his house full of food, and provision laid up for a whole yeere yea for many yeeres, yet he must still pray: *Give us this day our daily bread;* and still pray that the Lord would give him the use of those things, and give them power and strength to doe him good. So if a man be strong to follow his labour, and be never so able to doe the workes of his calling; yet hee must still crave strength, and assistance from the Lord, that the Lord would blesse his strength, and give him the right use of it, and continue it to him.

Now this is a thing either not knowne, or little regarded of many. They rush upon the workes of their callings, presuming on their owne strength: the Lord therefore

Vse 2.

Ability and liberty of speech to the Minister of the Gospell, must be sought for at the hands of the Lord.

Note.

Dott. 6.

He that hath the gift of utterance, ought to pray and to entreat others to pray for the continuance and increase of that gift.

Vse.

Reproofe of those who rush

upon the works
of their callings
presuming on
their owne
strength,

therefore doth sometimes blow upon their strength, and suddenly turnes it to weakenesse.

Having now handled the matter which the Apostle intreateth the Colossians to pray for, in the behalfe of himselfe and *Timothy*: come we to the end and purpose for which hee desired that ability and liberty might be given them in these words (*to speake the mystery of Christ*) The Apostle desired that the doore of utterance might bee opened to him and *Timothy*, for the publishing and preaching of the Gospell, the excellency whereof hee sets out by two arguments.

First, by the high and heavenly matter of it, containing in it heavenly mysteries of Christ.

Secondly, by the worth of it in respect of the greatest affliction, that it is a doctrine so excellent, as it is worth the suffering for, to the losse of liberty, yea and life too, if the professors of it be thereunto called. And the Apostle saith, that he for the professing and preaching of the Gospell, doubted not to expose himselfe to trouble, and to be bound with chaines as an evill doer, and so by his owne suffering for it, he prones the excellency of it, in these words (*wherefore I am also in bonds*).

Interpre-
tation.

Let us first cleare the words touching the sense and meaning of them (*to speake*) that is, to publish, declare: and by speech to make knowne (*the mystery of Christ*) that is, the doctrine of the Gospell: for so the Apostle calls it, *Ephesians 6. 19. The secret of the Gospell*. Now the Gospell is called (*the mystery of Christ*), because Christ is the subject matter of it, & he is the very substance of the Gospell, the Gospell containing in it the doctrine of Christ his incarnation and offices, his humiliation, his exaltation, his humanity, his divinity, his office of mediation, and all things concerning the life and death of Christ.

And againe, the Gospell is called a mystery, because it is wonderfull deepe, secret and unsearchable, such an excellent, and withall, such an hidden thing, as the understanding and knowledge of it cannot be attained by any wit of man, no nor of Angels, who are therefore said to stoope downe to looke into the marvellous work of redemption, and the secrets of the Gospell, *1. Pet. 1. 12. (Wherefore I am also in bonds)* These words have no difficulty in them, the meaning of them is briefly this, for which excellent doctrine of the Gospell I also suffer restraint of my liberty, and I am imprisoned and bound in prison.

In the first place observe we here that our Apostle desired ability and liberty of utterance to be given to him and *Timothy*, for this end and purpose, that they might publish and declare, and by speaking make knowne the doctrine of the Gospell: they desired not that gift for their owne praise, that they might seeme learned, (for without the gift of utterance, a mans learning lies hid as a Jewell in a darke place) or for their owne profit, that they might bee more liberally rewarded by the Church, but that they might by speech utter forth, and declare the secrets of the Gospell. Here then just occasion is given to shew that the gift of utterance bestowed on the Minister of the Gospell both ought to bee used, and not to be a talent hid and wrapped up in a napkin: and that it ought to bee used to a right end, not to his owne praise, nor his owne profit, but to the publishing of the secrets of the Gospell, so as may be most for the glory of God, and the good of his people: but on these things I will not stand, let it suffice onely to have named them.

In that the Apostle desires the gift of speech to speake the mystery of Christ, and by speech to make knowne the doctrine of the Gospell.

We may easily see, that speaking or preaching of the word by the tongue of man, is justified and proved to us. *Verbum vocale*, as it is (called) a publishing, a making knowne of the doctrine of the word by the voyce of man, is warranted, it is a thing that may and ought to be used: yea, it is a matter of necessity,

Doct. 7.
The preaching
of the word, by
the tongue and
voice of man,

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It is needfull, that the doctrine of the word bee made knowne by the ſpeech of man, as may eaſily be proved.

For as the Apoſtle ſaith, Rom. 1. 10. the Goſpell is the power of God to ſalvation, but to whom? to every one generally without exception of any? no, but to every one that beleeveſh, ſo doth the Apoſtle limit that power: and how is ſaith wrought by the bare letter and ſentence of the Goſpell, recorded in the written word? no, but by the Goſpell preached, Rom. 10. 14.

How ſhall they beleeve without a Preacher? for the working of faith, the Goſpel muſt be heard, and not only heard by the bare repetition of the ſentence of it, but heard preached (that is) the ſecret myſteries of it, opened, and applyed by the voyce and ſpeech of man called to that office.

And there is yet further reaſon for it, namely this: the ſentence of the Goſpel is generall, the promiſes of life and ſalvation, are indefinitely propounded in the written word: whoſoever beleeves in the Sonne of God ſhall be ſaved, &c. and they are above the reach of naturall underſtanding, ſuch as naturall reaſon cannot comprehend: and generals of that nature muſt needs bee unprofitable, if they be not unfolded and applyed: and therefore it is needfull that the doctrine of the Goſpel ſhould bee publiſhed and made knowne by the preaching of men called to that function: and the Lord hath ordained that men called to teach the Goſpel, ſhould by ſpeaking utter forth the ſecrets of it, & in his name ſhould expound and apply the ſame to the perſons of their hearts particularly.

Fiſt this croſſeth the fooliſh conceit of Anabaptiſts and familists who hold that the publike miniſterie and teaching of the word by the voyce and ſpeech of man is needleſſe: they alledge, for defence of their opinion, that of Ier. 31. 34. where the Prophet foretels that in the time of the Goſpel, under the new Teſtament, men ſhould no more teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, ſaying, Know the Lord, but they ſhould all know him from the leaſt of them unto the greateſt of them. Therefore (ſay they) teaching now by the voice of man is needleſſe.

Answer, the Prophets meaning is, that Gods Elect in the time of the new Teſtament ſhould not onely be taught by outward miniſtry and ſpeech of man, but inwardly alſo by the Spirit of God, as appeares in the verſe before: I will put my Law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will bee their God, and they ſhall be my people.

Oh but ſaith the Familist, if that be the meaning of the Prophet, then Saint Iohn, 1. Ioh. 2. 27. hath ſhewed it to bee needleſſe to bee taught by the voice of man: The anointed (ſaith he) (that is) the Spirit which yee have received of him dwelleth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you.

Again, the meaning of Saint Iohn is, that the Elect having received the Spirit, need not that any man ſhould teach them to diſcerne truth taught, from error and deceit: but are inwardly taught by the Spirit, and have their mindes enlightened, and their judgements cleared, to diſcerne betwene truth and error: and that this is his meaning, it is clearly affirmed in the verſe before, Theſe things have I written unto you concerning them that doe deceive you, and ſo (notwithſtanding theſe exceptions) it remaineth a truth, that it is very needfull that the doctrine of the written word of God be made knowne by the ſpeech of man called to ſpeake, and that by utterance and ſpeech it bee opened and applyed to the hearts for their inſtruction and comfort.

And let this ſerve to order our conceit and eſtimation, touching the ſpeaking of the word, by the voyce and tongue of man, called to that office.

Let us not thinke and eſteeme it as a needleſſe thing, or a matter arbitrary, left to our choice to heare, or not to heare at our pleaſure: it is moſt needfull for the working of ſaving knowledge and faith: and learne thou to account it as the ordinance of God to that purpoſe: and if thou know not God as hee hath

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made

thereunto called is a thing lawfull and neceſſary.
Reason 1.

Reason 2.

Uſe 1.

The opinion of Anabaptiſts and Familists who denie the teaching of the word by the miniſtrie of man, overthrowed.

Object.

Anſw.

Object.

Anſw.

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nance of God.

made him selfe knowne in his Word, thou knowest him not to thy comfort.

Now thou canst not know God (as hee is revealed in his word) ordinarily, but by his word opened and applied by the speech of man called to that office, and therefore bee not thou either so unthankfull to God for his mercy in appointing man like to thy selfe, to teach thee: or so injurious to thy selfe, as lightly to regard the word spoken to thee, by the ministry of man.

Now this is a thing whereof the Ministers of the word have just cause to complaine in this decrepit and wicked age of the world: some think they know as much as hee that speaks can telle them: and men now (for the most part) if they come to heare the word preached, make small reckoning of the doctrine of the word, made knowne to them by the speech of man called to that office, especially of the doctrine of the law. If their finnes be discovered, and the danger wherein they are (by reason of their finnes) and the judgements due to their finnes bee denounced against them, they thinke those are but the words of men, the words of their Preachers, and no such thing shall come unto them, and they blesse themselves in their owne hearts, and still goe on in their sinne.

Now then seeing the speaking of the word is so lightly regarded, and vocall speaking doth so little good: we may justly look, that the Lord should cause that to cease and now come amongst us with reall sermons, even his plagues and judgements. The heavens seeme to threaten judgement that they shall be as brasse, and the earth as iron.

Let us therefore be warned in time, whilst the word is yet sounding in our eares, by the voice of man, to make more account of it: let us esteeme and reverence the speaking of the word by the ministry of man, as the ordinance of God, and make conscience of yeelding obedience unto it, lest the Lord seeing our light regard of that soft and familiar voyce of man, hee take that from us, and send out his fearefull thundring voyce of judgement: that seeing we refuse to yeeld our selves flexible to the one, wee may bee broken and crushed, and shattered in peeces by the other.

In the next place, let it be observed that the doctrine of the Gospell containing the doctrine of Christ his incarnation and offices, his life and death: is here called the ministerie of Christ, a doctrine deep and secret, farre above the reach of mans wit and understanding: the consideration of this doth offer unto us this conclusion.

That it is no easie matter truly to understand, know and beleve the doctrine of the Gospell: a man cannot easily come to have knowledge, and faith in the secrets of the Gospell, in the doctrine of Christ his incarnation, his office of mediation, his two natures, personall union of them, and other things needfull to be knowne and beleaved.

And hence it is that the Apostle saith, 1. Timoth. 3. 16. without controversie, the doctrine of godlinesse, that is, the Gospell containing matter of Christ his person and offices: that doctrine is not onely a mysterie, but a great mysterie, and an exceeding profoundnesse and depth, and that (without all question or controversie) the word signifieth by all mens confession, that is, an axiome or truth, held and confessed of all, that the doctrine touching Christ his person, and offices, is not easily conceived, no not by the best naturall wits: it were easie to give instance in particulars, 1. Corinth. 1. 23. Wee preach Christ crucified, to the Iewes a stumbling blocke, and unto the Grecians foolishnesse (saith the Apostle) Act. chap. 17. verse 18. The Athenians, the wisest of the Heathen, and the wisest among the Philosophers, when Paul preached to them Iesus, and the Resurrection, they said hee was a babler, a trifler or setter forth of strange gods.

Doct. 8.
It is no easie
matter truly to
understand
and beleve
the doctrine of
the Gospell.

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The reason of this is plaine, namely this: There is no seed of the doctrine of Christ in nature: the morall Law was written in nature before the fall, and since, there is so no remnants of it in us, Rom. 2. 15 the Gentiles shew the effect of the Law written in their hearts their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts accusing one another or excusing.

And the doctrine of Iesus Christ incarnate, the mediator of the new testament, is above the reach of nature created, much more of nature corrupted.

And therefore it is no easie matter truly to know and beleve the secrets of the Gospel: and this serves to wipe away a vile slander throwne upon our Church by the Papists. They say we teach an easie way to salvation, in that we say to men according to the doctrine of the Gospel: repent and beleve in Christ, and thou shalt be saved: behold (saith the Papist) an easie way to bee saved: is it so? can it bee an easie thing for a man by faith to apprehend Christ and his merits, and to apply them to himselfe to his comfort, and yett bee so hard matter for a man, truly to know, understand and beleve the doctrine of Christ? can one of these bee hard and the other easie? it is not possible, and therefore it is a meere slander cast upon us by the Papists, that wee teach an easie way to salvation: rather (indeed) they teach an easie way to salvation by implicite faith.

But let us further thinke on the doctrine delivered to this purpose: is it so, that it is no easie matter to know and beleve the doctrine of Christ, because there is no seed of it in nature?

Then deceive not thy selfe, thinke not that thou dost truly beleve in Christ to thy comfort, when thou hast onely such a faith as may bee easily had, a faith conceived without any hardnesse: a faith conceived onely by tradition which (indeed) is the faith of the greatest number in the world: they having beene borne and bred, and brought up in the bosome of the Church, and having heard it delivered in the Church, that Iesus Christ came into the world, tooke our nature upon him, and in that nature suffered death upon the crosse, and gave himselfe a ranfome for all men: thereupon they conceive in mind a notion and a bare conceit, that Christ is their Saviour, and they can repeat all the Articles of the Creed, and presently (as they imagine) stedfastly beleve them, never finding any hardnesse, or any unbeliefe in their hearts, in respect of any one article. If thy faith in Christ bee such a faith, it is no true faith. If thou never yett felt the mighty and powerfull word of God, or the working of his mighty power, as the Apostle speakes, Ephesians 1. 19. working in thee understanding and faith in the Gospel, and in the doctrine of Christ, certainly thou hast no true faith but fancy.

The doctrine of Christ his incarnation and Offices, is a doctrine full of great mysteries which cannot bee comprehended without much hardnesse, and striving against naturall unbeliefe: and know for a truth, that thou dost never beleve the Gospel to thy comfort, till thou canst say, with a true feeling of thine owne weaknesse, and want of faith, as he said in the Gospel, *Lord I beleve, Lord helpe mine unbeliefe*. A faith easily conceived without feeling any hardnesse and struggling against unbeliefe, is but a loose imagination: in time of triall, either temptation or great affliction, that faith will faile thee, it is a faith of nature and reason, and not of the Spirit, and when nature and reason faile, that cannot stand.

Therefore deceive not thy selfe, never rest till thou find in thee a faith conceived, by the use of the meanes, hearing of the word preached, meditation, prayer, and such like, and wrought in thee by a supernaturall power, overcoming thy naturall hardnesse, and unbeliefe: thou maist be sure that a faith so wrought, is a faith of Gods Spirit, and that faith will never faile, the gates of hell shall never prevaile against it.

Reason 1.

A slander throwne upon our Church by the Papists removed.

Vse. 2.

A faith easily had is no true faith, & herein many deceive themselves.

Vse 3.

Whence it is that men of excellent wits and greatest learning doe notwithstanding erre in the doctrine of Christ his incarnation and offices.

From the doctrine delivered wee may further gather; whence it comes to passe that men of finest wits, and greatest learning, yet erre in the doctrine of Christ his incarnation, and offices, and are not able rightly to conceive them, and they are as the sealed Booke unto them, *Isai. 29. 11*. Even from hence: these things are deepe mysteries, the true knowledge of them cannot bee reached by the best wit in the world, it is onely the Spirit of God, that must open, and reveale them; and if the Lord have vouchsafed that mercy to thee, and given thee a true understanding of them; thou being a simple poore man or woman, Oh blesse his name for that great mercy: hee hath vouchsafed that mercy to thee, which he hath denied to thousands besides, as good as thou by nature; yea, to many living under the same meanes with thee: therefore thou hast great cause to blesse God for his mercy, and to say with Christ, *Matth. 11. 25*. I thanke thee oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and men of understanding, and opened them unto babes, to mee a poore silly creature and simple man, or woman; yea, let thy heart, tongue and life expresse and set forth the great mercy of God towards thee in that respect.

Come we to the matter of doctrine offered from the second argument here, setting out the excellency of the Gospell (namely) the Apostles suffering for it, expressed in the last words of this verse (wherefore, or for which, I am also in bonds).

Now in that the Apostle saith that the doctrine of the Gospell is not only a doctrine full of high and hidden mysteries, and in that respect an excellent doctrine, but that for it also he refused not to suffer imprisonment, and losse of his liberty, and in that regard also a doctrine of great excellency and dignity, wee may easily conceive.

That the sufferings of such as professe the Gospell, bee they Ministers, or others, the afflictions that are throwne upon true professors of the Gospell for the profession of it, are so farre from being an argument against the worthinesse of the doctrine of the Gospell, as that they much cleere, and strongly prove the excellency of the same: even through the sufferings of the true professors of the Gospell, doth the excellency of the same appeare.

For why? Therein appeare plainly, the power, the vertue, and the glory of the Gospell, that it is a most powerfull and glorious doctrine: Were it not so, were not the Gospell full of power to uphold the professors of it in the time of their sufferings, doubtlesse, they would not suffer for it, with such boldnesse confidence, and constancy as they do, sometimes to the shedding of their blood, and losse of their lives: and were there not a glory in the Gospell to overshadow the shame of it, and were not men well assured of the excellency of the doctrine of the Gospell, for which they suffer: without question, they would never so cheerefully, and with rejoycing (as they doe) endure for it the extremest torments that their persecutors can devise to lay upon them, and therefore we may safely say that the sufferings of such as professe the Gospell, even their suffering for the Gospels sake, doe much cleare and manifest the excellency of the Gospell, and shew forth the glory of it, and tend much to the advancement of it. The Apostle affirmes it plainly, *Philip. 1. 12*. That the things he suffered for the Gospell, his afflictions, his bonds, had turned rather to confirmation and advancement of the Gospell, than otherwise.

Now then, is it so, that the afflictions of the Ministers and others, for the Gospels sake, set out the dignity and excellency of it? See then, how that which the Devill thinkes will be a meanes to disgrace the Gospell, and the profession of it, the Lord turnes to a meanes to bring glory to it. The Gospell being most repugnant to the tyranny of Satan, the manners of the wicked world, and the corruption of our sinfull flesh, the Devill and his instruments bestir'd themselves

Dott. 9.

The excellency of the Gospell appears clearly through the sufferings of such as truly professe it.

Reason.

Vse.

That which the devill thinkes will be a means to disgrace the Gospell the Lord turnes to be a means to bring glory to it.

themselves against it, and pursue the professors of it, with many indignities and much hard measure, thinking thereby to make the Gospell it selfe odious, and to bring the profession of it into contempt & disgrace, but altogether in vaine, the more they labour by afflicting the professors of the Gospell, to disgrace the Gospell and the profession of it, the more doe they cleare the excellency and glory, both of the Gospell, and of the true profession of it, and such as have their eyes opened by the Spirit of God, are able even through the afflictions of the professors of the Gospell, to see and discern that excellencie and glory; indeed carnall and worldly minded men, see no manner of beauty nor glory at all in the Gospell, and the profession of it, being under many sufferings, they hold the sincere profession of the Gospell base, and contemptible, and why so? Because as it is, A ct. 28. 22. that way is every where spoken against, because it lies under many nick-names, and reproachfull termes, but if thine eyes be opened by the spirit of God, thou seest even thorow those reproches and disgracefull termes, a glorious lustre, and bright shining glory of that holy profession, and thou dost not looke on the true profession of the Gospell with a right eye, with an eye opened and cleared by the Spirit of God, till thou see the beauty and glory of it lying under many and great afflictions and sufferings, the more the world seekes to disgrace the Gospell, and the true professors of it, the more the glory of it appeares, the brighter it shines, and if thou see it not, thou lookest on it with a carnall eye, and there is no more comfort of the Gospell belonging to thee, than to one that is carnall: and therefore if thou wouldst find the comfort that belongs to a true professor of the Gospell, never rest till thou bee able to see, and discern the excellency, and glory of the Gospell, and the sincere profession of it, manifested, and made cleare by the suffering of true professors, yea, never rest, till thou bee, not only, not discouraged, but as the Apostle said of some in his time, Phil. 1. 14. more emboldned and heartned to goe on in a constant profession of the Gospell, by the sufferings of others for the same. Let not the indignities and reproaches throwne on the true professors of the Gospell make thee more out of heart, and more out of love with the profession of the Gospell, if they doe, thy heart is not right within thee.

In the next place, observe wee that the Apostle making mention of his sufferings, and in particular, of his imprisonment, he specifich the cause of it, he tels the Colossians, hee was in prison and bonds, and that not for any misdemenor, for any crime committed by him deserving bonds, but for the heavenly doctrine of the Gospell, that his professing and preaching the Gospell was the cause wherefore he was imprisoned, and that for it he was in bonds.

Whence we are taught thus much: that of the same kind of calamities, and sufferings that befall the godly, and the ungodly, of the same kind of sufferings that befall the children of God, and the wicked, there be different causes.

Though the calamities and sufferings, that are inflicted on men, as imprisonment, banishment, sundry kinds of torments, and death, are common to the godly with the ungodly, and light on them both, yet the causes for which they suffer are different; the wicked they are punished for their wickedness, and for their offences, but the godly, they are pressed by the wicked with many vexations, even for their piety and religion, and so though they suffer the same things, yet not for the same cause. Wee may see it in many examples, Gen. 39. chapter, verse 20. We reade that *Ioseph* was imprisoned in the place where the Kings prisoners lay bound, and in the 40. chapter, vers. 3. wee find also that *Pharaohs* two officers, his chiefe Butler and his Baker, were cast into the same prison where *Ioseph* was, and so both *Ioseph* and they suffered the same imprisonment, but the causes of their imprisonment were much different one from the other; *Ioseph* hee was put in prison at the false and slanderous accusation of his mistresse, indeed the true cause was his refusal to commit folly with her,

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Vse 2.

Men looke not upon the true profession of the Gospell with a right eye till they see beauty of it thorow many and great afflictions.

Doct. 10.

Though the godly and the wicked many times suffer the same thing yet the causes for which they suffer, are much different

and to sinne against God. But *Pharaohs* Officers were committed for their offences against their Lord and King, and justly for their deserts. We have example of this also in Christ and the two thieves that were crucified with him: both Christ and they were in the same condemnation, as one of the thieves said, Luk. 23. 40. (that is) in the same judgement: they suffered the same punishment, yet how different the cause of their suffering was, from the cause of Christ, we know well, and one of the thieves did acknowledge it, verse 41. We are (indeed) faith hee, righteously here, but this man hath done nothing amisse.

This then is manifest, that howsoever the godly and the wicked be under the same troubles, the same pressures, and vexations: the godly are imprisoned, and so are the wicked, yet not for the same cause, the godly they suffer unjustly, and for a good cause, the wicked they suffer justly, and for their evill doing.

And this serveth: First, to justifie and cleare that common received sentence, Not the punishment but the cause is that which makes the Martyr. Hee that suffers the same torments, and the same tortures, that holy martyrs doe, is not therefore a Martyr; no, no, it is the cause for which a man suffers that makes him a Martyr.

A man may suffer some things that holy men of God doe, and yet bee a wicked man, and suffer for his evill doing, and this is the very cause of popish Martyrs. The Papists, they canonize some for Saints, and register them for Martyrs, who have suffered death for no lesse than monstrous treason against their Prince.

Oh, but (say some) *Catholikes* suffer imprisonment and death too, for their conscience, and for religion, and what say you to them? Are they not holy men and Martyrs?

Surely no, wee tell them they must prove they suffer for conscience rightly informed, and for Orthodoxall sound and true religion, else can they not challenge the name of holy men and Martyrs.

Now this they are never able to doe: their persecuted *Catholikes* (as they call them) suffer for superstition and Antichristian heresie, and therefore cannot be truly held as holy men and martyrs.

But for the use of this point to our selves: is it so that howsoever the godly and wicked, both lye under the same trouble, and the same suffering; yet if for different causes, the one for sin, the other for piety and religion, and for a good cause? Surely, then it must needs be weake and rash judgement by and by to censure and condemne them for troublesome persons that suffer, never examining the cause for which they suffer: that cannot chuse but be headdy and untimely judgement, and we must take heed of it. And this must further teach every one of us, if wee suffer any thing at the hands of men, to looke to the cause of our suffering; in thy suffering, look that the cause of it be good, and not evill, as *Peter* hath exhorted. 1. Pet. 4. 15. Let none of you suffer as an evill doer. Stand not thou on thy suffering (a wicked man may suffer the same that a godly man doth) but on thy suffering for a good cause. Some men being justly smitten with the tongue of others, and hardly spoken of and that justly they lying under an hard censure, (and yet just) for their pride, their covetousnesse, their uncleannesse, their faithlesse dealings in covenants, their defrauding, their circumventing, and going beyond others in bargaining, and the like. What do they? & how doe they commonly shift off the matter? oh (say they) men speake ill of me; but say all what they will, or can, I care not for it, better men than I, have been ill spoken of: Christ himselfe had scarce a good word, when hee was here on the earth. It is true indeed, good men, and Christ, have beene ill spoken off: but did Christ, and good men deserve it? did they ever provoke others to it by their ill deeds? thou wilt say no: Why then, dost thou not see what a deceiving argument thou useth? Good men and Christ, have suffered in this kind: they have beene

Vse 1.

That sentence justified, that not the punishment but the cause makes the martyr. The cause of popish Martyrs

Object.

Answer.

Vse 2.

It is rash judgement to condemne men for troublesome persons, onely because they suffer, never examining the cause of their suffering

Vse 3.

If we suffer any thing at the hands of men, we must looke to the cause of our suffering, that we suffer for well-doing.

beene ill spoken of, I now suffer hard and ill speeches, and therefore I passe not for them. Why? but thou thy selfe knowest, Christ and good men deserved not to be ill spoken of; they have been ill spoken of unjustly for well doing, but thou justly for ill doing: wilt thou then throwd thy selfe under the example of Christ, and of good men, in regard of thy suffering? Thou deceivest thy selfe: if thou be ill spoken of, and thine own conscience tell thee thou deservest it, think not to shift off the matter, and to finde comfort in saying, Christ and good men have bin ill spoken of: no, no, though they that speake ill of thee, and revile thee, sinned in so doing: yet there is no comfort in thy suffering. Indeed, if thou be ill spoken of unjustly, or for a good cause, there is comfort in that suffering: some say sometimes, Oh, if I had deserved such hard speeches, it would never grieve mee. Thou speakest foolishly, if thou haddest deserved them, then were there just cause of griefe: but not deserving them, there is no cause of griefe at all, but rather of comfort, and rejoycing: and therefore in thy suffering in this or any other kind, ever looke thou to the cause of thy suffering. If thou suffer justly, then be humbled and repent of thy sinne, otherwise the Lord will charge it more fully upon thee, at the last day: if unjustly, or for a good cause, with meeknesse and patience possesse thy soule, and rejoyce in that thou art partaker of Christ his sufferings, 1. Pet. 4. 13. And if thou be railed on for pietie, and for religion, as he saith, vers. 14. there is a blessing belonging to thee, and through thy sides they strike the spirit of glory.

Observe yet further, in that the Apostle was imprisoned for the Gospell, wee are plainly taught, that for the Gospels sake, and for the true profession of the same, we must be also ready to suffer imprisonment, and losse of liberty, yea, and losse of life too, if we be called unto it. If then the case so stand, as we must either lose our lives, or forsake the true profession of the Gospell. Luk. 14. 26. saith our Saviour: *If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters: yea, and his owne selfe also: that is, in comparison of me and of my Gospell, he cannot be my disciple.* Therefore in the preparation of our hearts, we must ever be ready to suffer any torture, or torment for the Gospels sake, if the Lord vouchsafe us that honour, and we be thereunto called.

Now then this is a truth: ought true professors of the Gospell to be ready to lay downe their lives for the truth of the Gospell? oh then how farre short are many in the world from such preparation: how know you that, may some say? Surely it is easily knowne, and I can easily make it plaine: are not many in the world, so wedded to the sensuall pleasures and profits in the world, as they will not forsake them, for the keeping of faith and a good conscience? they will not forsake any sensuall pleasure, or any unlawfull gain that comes in, for the keeping of faith and a good conscience: and can wee then thinke that such persons are prepared to forsake wife, children, house and land, and to suffer the losse of their lives by fire or sword, if time of triall should come for the Gospels sake? no, no, there is no such matter, if the Gospell have not beene powerfull in thee, and wrought in thee a deniall of ungodlinesse and worldly lusts, certainly thou art not prepared to lay downe thy life for it: therefore deceive not thy selfe, thou must be prepared to suffer imprisonment, and losse of libertie for the Gospels sake, if time of triall come unto thee, and how soone it may come thou knowest not; and if it come, and thou bee not then prepared, a thousand to one (without the extraordinary mercy of God) thou wilt shrinke from Christ, and from the truth of his Gospell, and then woe bee to thee, Christ will denie thee, and be ashamed of thee, when he shall come in his glory, Luk. 9. 26. Therefore never rest till thou be prepared to lay downe thy life for the Gospels sake, and to that end, never rest till the Gospell have wrought powerfully in thee, a deniall of ungodlinesse and worldly lusts, and taught thee to live soberly, righteously,

Doct. 11.

We must be ready to suffer losse of liberty and of life also, if we be called unto it, for the true profession of the Gospell.

Use.

The failings of men in this particular duty discovered.

ously, and godly in this present world, Tit. 2. 12. and then (doubtlesse) thou art prepared to suffer any thing that shall bee laid upon thee for the Gospells sake, and if the time of triall come upon thee, thou shalt be able (through Gods grace assisting thee) to seale thy profession of the Gospell with thy dearest blood.

Verf. 4. That I may utter it, as it becommeth me to speake.

IN this verse the Apostle requires the prayers of the Colossians for himselfe, more particularly, that they would lift up their prayers to God for him more specially, that he being now in prison, and suffering for the Gospell, might with boldnesse, and all corrupt feare set apart, bee able to utter forth the secrets of the Gospell (*that I may utter*) and withall, hee sets downe in what manner hee desired that he might utter it, namely, in such manner as was meete, and fit for him to speake.

*Interpre-
tation.*

That I may utter it] The word (*it*) hath relation to that which went before, namely, the myserie of the doctrine of the Gospell: and the word here rendred (*utter*) signifies to manifest, and to make plaine and cleere, that I may discover and lay open the secrets of it, that I may make manifest, plaine and cleere, that deepe and hidden doctrine of the Gospell, as it becommeth me to speake, or as I ought to speake: for so the words are translated, Ephes. 6. 20. which words are not to bee taken (as some have taught) as a reason of that which goeth before drawne from the necessitie of duty, as if the Apostles meaning were, that I may utter the doctrine of the Gospell, because I ought to speake it, and because I am bound by the necessitie of duty: but as expressing the manner, in what manner, he desired that he might utter it, as if he had said: that I might utter it in such manner as I ought, and as it becommeth mee, and this *decorum* and manner of speaking must be understood as having a double relation, both to the excellencie of the doctrine of the Gospell it selfe, and to the office and calling of the Apostle. The Apostle here meant such a manner of speaking as was meet and fit, both in regard of the excellencie of the Gospell, and of that trust of Apostleship that was reposed in him. Thus then wee are to conceive the words of this verse, as if the Apostle had said: I entreat you to pray for me, more specially, being a prisoner, that I may be able by speech to manifest and make plaine that deepe and hidden doctrine of the Gospell, in such manner of speaking, as is meet and fit, both in regard of the excellencie of the Gospell it selfe, and of that trust of Apostleship that is reposed in me.

Now here it is not to bee passed by without observation, that the Apostle entreated the prayers of the Colossians for himselfe more specially, that hee being now in trouble for the Gospell, in prison and in bonds, for the preaching of it, they would be mindfull of him, and recommend him to God in their prayers, especially and above others: that now in time of triall he might be strengthened, and not shrink backe for feare, nor by any sinister and corrupt affection, bee diverted and turned aside from a sound and sincere utterance and manifestation of the truth of the Gospell, but that he might utter it, and deliver it as it ought to bee delivered.

Doct. 1.
We are especially to remember in our prayers, those that suffer for the truth of the Gospell.
Reason.

Hence we may note briefly, that howsoever wee are to recommend all, both Ministers and other professors of the Gospell to God by prayer, yet especially those that are in trouble, those that suffer imprisonment or in any other kinde, for the truth of the Gospell; we are to remember them in our prayers especially, yea (as the Apostle saith, Rom. 15. 30.) to strive and to be most earnest and instant in prayer to God for them: and there is great reason for it: Because indeed in time of suffering, & triall, the divell will be most busie, both by inward suggestions, and by outward assaults, both of terrours, and flatteries; and that corruption of nature that is left in the dearest Saints of God will then be working,

ing: and howsoever in time of calme many men hold on a constant course in the profession of the Gospel, and live unblameably in the sight of men, yet many times their weaknesse, and sometimes their hypocrisie, shewes it selfe when the storme of persecution is risen, and they are tossed with the wind of trouble; and therefore our part is in praying for others, to remember them in our prayers especially, that are under the triall, and suffer imprisonment, or in any kind for the truth of the Gospel: we are to pray to the Lord, that he would vouchsafe to them such wisdom, Christian courage & boldnesse, meeknesse, patience, constancie, and every needfull grace, and such a measure of needfull grace, as they may bee able both to speake, doe, and suffer, in such sort as God may bee glorified, the truth of the Gospel maintained without impeachment, and their owne soules comforted: and on the former ground, such as are in trouble must learne not to bee secure (in time of triall) upon confidence of their owne gifts. Admit a mans gifts were not inferiour to the holy Apostle *Paul*; yet such a man being in trouble for the Gospels sake, ought in feare and humilitie to call on God for strength, and to entreat others likewise to doe the same, in his behalfe: but let it suffice to have pointed at these things offered to us from the circumstances of the person of the Apostle, and his condition at that time being a prisoner. Now touching the matter of this verse, we are in the next place to mark, that the Apostle doth here desire to be helped by the prayers of the Colossians, that they would pray for him in particular, that he might utter forth and make manifest the myserie of Christ. He here changeth the terme, in the verse before he used the word (*speake*) but here he saith, that I may utter it, that I may manifest and make plaine. Whence we are given to understand thus much:

That the speaking of the myserie of Christ, the preaching of the Gospel, ought to bee a manifestation of the secrets of it, the Minister in preaching of the Gospel must manifest and make plaine the doctrine of it, and there ought to be a perspicuitie and plainnesse in the ministrie of the word, yea the word ought to be delivered in such evidence and plainnesse, as the meanest capacitie may bee able to conceive and to understand it, and as if Iesus Christ crucified, were pictured and painted out before the eyes of men, as the Apostle said by way of reproofe to the Galatians, Galat. 3. 1. *O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, to whom Iesus Christ before was described in your sight, and among you crucified?* As if hee had said, to whom I have preached the doctrine of the Gospel in such evidence and plainnesse, as if Christ had been painted out before your eyes, and had been crucified among you, and you had seen his blood distilling from his hands and side.

And hence it is, that our Apostle calls his preaching of the Gospel, a declaration, or a manifestation of the truth: for so the word signifieth, 2. Cor. 4. ver. 2. *In declaration of the truth, we approve our selves to every mans conscience in the sight of God.*

The reason of this truth is plaine, namely this: The end of the preaching of the Gospel is to bring men to knowledge and faith in Christ, that they may come to know Christ and him crucified, and may beleve in him to their comfort and salvation,

Now this cannot be effected, this end cannot be attained, unless men rightly conceive and understand the doctrine of Christ: therefore it must bee delivered in such evidence and plainnesse as they may conceive and understand it.

That manner of preaching therefore cannot be justified, that is full of obscuritie, wherein the doctrine is wrapped up in such words and sentences, as are above the reach and understanding of the hearers, wherein there is a mixture of speech, and intermingling of Latine and Greeke with English, before hearers that are unlearned: and howsoever some in way of defence of it, say, that kind of preaching is learned: indeed and truth, there is no such matter, only that

How we are to
practise this
duty

Men that are
in trouble
must not be se-
cure, but must
be earnest with
God themselves,
and entreat
others also to
pray for them
that they may
be strengthened

Doct. 2.

There ought
to be a perspi-
cuitie & plain-
nesse in the
preaching of
the word.

Reason.

Preaching that
is full of ob-
scuritie, and
above the un-
derstanding of
the hearers,
cannot be ju-
stified.

Vse 2.

We must not except against the doctrine of the word because it is delivered in plain, easie and familiar termes.

that teacher shewes learning, that shewes men Christ, he is the learned preacher that is able rightly to unfold the mysterie of Christ, and to manifest the secrets of the Gospell, and so to paint out Christ before the people, as that they may (as it were) see him crucified and glorified, and that life that flowes out of his blood, and the comforts that are treasured up in him.

And againe, must the doctrine of the Gospell bee delivered in such plaine termes, as men of the meanest capacitie may be able to understand? oh then take heed thou except not against the doctrine of the word for the plainnesse of deliverie, if the doctrine be sound and true: it is but a cavill of the flesh, and no just exception to say, it is delivered in plaine, easie and familiar termes: and yet many there bee in the world that have no great liking of the truth of the doctrine delivered, even because it is rendered unto them, in a familiar plainnesse and simplicitie: *they have itching ears.* 2. Timoth. chap. 4. vers. 3. they delight to heare things delivered in more loftie and glorious termes, surely such persons shew the vanitie and weaknesse of their understanding, and the unsoundnesse of their judgements. Why shouldest thou except against or dislike the truth delivered in plaine and easie termes? Art thou offended with the Lord, for dealing plainly with thee: whence comes that exception and dislike? Consider thou whence it comes, and thou shalt find it comes from thine owne corruption, helped forward by strong delusion of the enemy of thy salvation: for thou exceptest against that which may bee most for thy good, and likest that which many times turnes to thy hurt. The Lord (justly punishing the vanitie of thy mind, and the pride of thine heart) suffers thee to sucke in poyson and dangerous errors, lying hid under loftie and goodly words, which thou understandest not, and therefore take thou heed of excepting against the doctrine delivered in plainnesse of words. If thou heare the truth of the word plainly delivered, be so faire from excepting against it, as even therefore blesse God for his mercie, that vouchsafes to discover to thee the truth of his word so familiarly, remembering that speech of the Apostle, 1. Cor. chap. 14. verse 22. *Strange tongues are for a signe,* even a judgement and punishment sent of God to them that beleeve not. Therefore take heede thou neither except against, nor dislike of the doctrine of the word, for the plainnesse of it; the plainer and the more familiarly the word is delivered to thee in the publike ministerie, the greater token and signe it is of Gods loving kindnesse and favour towards thee, and yet know wee, that this perspicuitie and plainnesse in preaching of the word, must not be rude, rusticke and unseemly, and therefore the Apostle addes in this verse, *as it becommeth me to speake.*

Doct. 3.

The Minister of the word must lay open the doctrine of the word, in such manner as is futable both to the excellencie of the matter, and to the dignitie also of his own calling.

And so the next point of doctrine laid downe in this verse is this: The Ministers care and studie must bee, not onely in plaine and familiar termes to declare and speake the Gospell of Iesus Christ, but also so to speake it, as it ought to be declared. The minister must not onely have care to manifest, and to lay open the doctrine of the word, but hee must looke also that hee doe it in such manner as is meet, both according to the excellencie of the matter, and dignitie of his owne calling, and that trust that is reposed in him: 1. Pet. 4. 11. *If any man speake,* (saith the Apostle) that is, in the publike ministerie of the word, *let him speake, not onely the words of God,* but the words of God, as it becomes him to speake such words. Wee find that the Minister of the Gospell is graced with many excellent titles, hee is called the messenger and ambassadour of Christ, hee is stiled with the name of Angel, Revel. 2. and chap. 3. He is said to bee the Lords Steward put in trust by him, 1. Cor. 4. 1. all which teach him that hee must deliver the message of his Lord and Master, with due regard of the dignitie of his message, and answerable to that trust that is reposed in him.

Not to stand on the generall: the particulars of this duty are many, but especially these two.

First,

First, the Minister must looke that hee utter forth and declare the doctrine of the word purely, and powerfully: for the word of God is pure, and must be purely thought on, and purely delivered, without mixture of mens devices, or mens authorities.

Secondly, it must also be delivered (as the Apostle saith, 1. Cor. 2. 4.) in plaine evidence and demonstration of the Spirit, that is, in such sort as sinne may thereby be rebuked, the conscience rified, and judged, and the secret corruption of the heart made manifest: and that it may be a meanes (by Gods blessing upon it) to infill the grace of faith, and repentance, and holy obedience into the hearts of the hearers: yea the word must be delivered with such evidence of the spirit, as the hearers may discern the power, the presence, and the majestie of God in the preaching of it, and bee forced to say in plaine termes, without question God is in the Preacher, 1. Cor. 14. 24. That is the right manner of handling the word of God, when the preachers of it shew not words but power, as the Apostle saith, 1. Cor. 4. 20.

Now this doctrine might be applied to reprove sundry sorts of teachers, as namely, such as deliver the word of God in the enticing words of mans wisdom, spirituall things in a carnall manner.

Secondly, such as mingle the word with their owne, and other mens devices, to make their doctrine have the more applause, than which, what can be more unworthy? as the Lord saith by his Prophet, Ierem. 23. 28. *What is chaffe to the wheate?*

Thirdly, such as for want of paines, or studie, deliver the word, either in termes unfit to teach, or perswade: or without order, and so not easie to be learned, and remembred, and so without power, as it hath no point to pierce the hearts of the hearers. These, and many other, come within the compasse of just reproofe by the doctrine delivered.

But let us thinke on it to this purpose: Is it so that the Minister must not only manifest the doctrine of the word, but he must deliver it purely, and powerfully: yea, with such evidence and demonstration of the Spirit, as the word spoken by him may judge the conscience, and search the secret corners of the hearts, and (as the holy Ghost saith, Heb. 4. 12.) *enter thorow, even to the dividing aunder of the soule and the spirit, and of the joynts and the marrow, and discover the thoughts of the heart, and be a meanes to worke grace in the hearers?*

O then, as the Apostle saith, 2. Cor. 2. 16. *Who is sufficient for these things?* It is no easie matter to preach the word: Men thinke the Ministers of the word of God speake whatsoever comes into their mindes: it is not so (if they speake the word as it ought to be spoken:) No, no, preaching of the word of God requires great labour, studie, meditation, and prayer: and the minister must not only be earnest in prayer himselfe, but after the example of the Apostle in this place, he must request others to pray for him, that hee may utter the doctrine of the Gospel as it becommeth him to utter it. Did Paul (who was guided by the spirit of God, and had the infallible assistance of the spirit, being an Apostle) desire to be prayed for, that he might utter the doctrine of the Gospel as it became him to speake? how great cause then have wee that are but ordinary Ministers to desire the prayers of the Church? we are much more to crave the prayers of Gods people, and they are to helpe us with their prayers. One saith well, consider that it is the easiest thing to heare, and it is the painfulest thing to preach the Gospel aright: therefore pray thou that the minister may utter the doctrine of the word, as it becommeth him to speake, that he may deliver it in such evidence, and plainnesse, and withall such puritie and powerfulness, as it ought to be delivered: and then doubtlesse, through Gods blessing upon it, thou shalt find it a meanes discovering the secret corruption of thine heart, and working saving knowledge in thee: yea, thou shalt find the do-

Two particulars required in the right handling of the word of God.

Sundry sorts of teachers briefly taxed.

Vjs.

It is a very hard matter to preach the word of God aright.

ctrine

Doctrine of the word so delivered, or meanes confirming and strengthening grace in thee, and making thee certaine of Gods grace in Christ: yea, making thee rejoyce in Gods presence in this life, and at the day of judgement to stand before him with joy: therefore be mindfull of this dutie.

Verf. 5. Walke wisely toward them that are without, and redeem the time.

THe Apostle in this verse proceeds to his second generall exhortation, wherein hee exhorts the Colossians to carrie themselves wisely toward them that are without, and this he doth generally in this verse, that they carrie themselves wisely in all things, and then that they carrie themselves wisely in one particular, namely, in the wise usage of their speech, *verf. 6.*

His generall exhortation in this verse is first propounded: *Walke wisely toward them that are without.* And then, more particularly declared, how they may so doe in the last words, namely, *By redeeming the time.*

(*And redeem the time*) First therefore of the generall exhortation, *Walke wisely toward them that are without.*

(*Walke*) That is, live, carrie your selves in life and conversation, both by your words and deeds: the word (*Walke*) is often so used in the Scripture. (*Wisely*) or as the word is (in wisdom, or with wisdom) The meaning is, with good discretion, with religious heed, and circumspection, as the Apostle saith, *Eph. 5. verf. 15. Take heed that ye walke circumspectly, not as fooles, but as wise.*

Now Christian discretion, and an holy warinesse is used in life and conversation, when in every thing, said, or done, there is regard had of the end of the speech, or action: that the word or deed, be to the glorie of God, and the good of others, and that it be without giving advantage of just exception against it, or any just cause of offence: that is (indeed) true Christian wisdom in life and conversation: (*Toward them*) That is, among them, or having any dealing with them: (*That are without*) By those that are without, we are to understand all beleevers, all that are out of the Church, or without Christ, as *Ephes. 2. 12.* Whether such as have not heard of Christ, as Infidels and Pagans, or such as have heard the doctrine of the Gospel, and yet have not received it, but still continue in their naturall hardnesse and unbeleefe.

Thus then we are to conceive these words, *Walke wisely toward them that are without.* As if the Apostle had said: Carrie your selves in life and conversation, both in your words, and deeds, with Christian wisdom and discretion, with an holy warinesse, and circumspection, look that in every thing, said, or done by you, there be regard had of a right end, even Gods glory, & the good of others, and let your behaviour be without just cause of exception, or offence to them that are unbelevers, of what sort soever they be, you living among them, as necessitie requires, or having businesses and dealings with them.

The dutie heere laid before us, comes to bee considered in the first place.

And it may thus be conceived: that true beleevers, such as truly professe the Gospel, are to carrie themselves wisely, with good discretion, with warinesse and circumspection, even toward them that are without, in their walking among the wicked, and unbelevers, and in their dealings with them: they must have a wise regard of their behaviour, they must looke that every thing, said, or done by them, be to Gods glory, and (if it bee possible) a meanes to worke good upon the wicked, and that it be without just cause of exception, and offence, I say, without just cause of exception, and offence: for many times the wicked take exception against the holy religious and godly behaviour of true beleevers, and are offended at it, *1. Pet. 4. 4.* And as the Prophet saith, *Hosea chap. 14. verf. 10. The wicked stumble, and fall in the snare of God: but that is offence*

Interpre-
tation.

Christian dis-
cretion, what
it is.

Doct. 1.

True belee-
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wise in their
behaviour and
dealings with
the wicked &
unbelevers,
and take heed
that they give
them no just
cause of excep-
tion or offence

offence taken, not given. True beleevers and professors of the Gospell must bee wise in their behaviour, and take heede they give not any just cause of exception, or offence, and that not onely to their weake brethren, but even to the wicked and unbelieving. And hence it is, that the Apostle doth exhort us, Rom. 12. verf. 17. *To procure things honest in the sight of all men: that is, words and deeds, not onely lawfull, and agreeable to the rule of honestie, and goodnesse, and the will of God revealed in his word, but such also as give no just offence to any, as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 10. 32. Give none offence, neither to the Jewe, nor to the Grecians, nor to the Church of God: neither to the Church, nor to those that are without the Church, 1 Thess. 4. 11. 12. The Apostle exhorted them of that Church, that they should study to bee quiet, and to meddle with their owne businesse, and to worke with their owne hands, to this end, that they might behave themselves honestly, (or as the word signifieth) decently towards them that are without, even in the sight of unbelievers.*

We see then there ought to be a Christian wisdom, a godly warinesse, and circumspection in such as are true beleevers, that in their behaviour among the wicked, they give them no just advantage, either to except against, or to bee offended with any thing, said, or done by them.

And the reason of this duilie is this: The life and behaviour of true beleevers ought to bee a visible confutation of the manners of the wicked: that when they looke upon it, they may bee checked and reprov'd, and thereby made to see how they ought to behave themselves, and may glorifie God in the day of the visitation, 1 Pet. 2. 12. And therefore it ought to bee farre from being like to the wicked life of unbelievers in any respect, that so it may give them no just cause of exception, and of stumbling at it.

Now then, to applie this: I may say to many professors in this case, as the Apostle said to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 6. 7. There is utterly a fault among you, there is in many professors of the Gospell too great a yeelding to their owne corrupt affections: some that make profession of the Gospell, carrie themselves not as wise, but as fooles, in the sight of the wicked and ungodly, and as *Mehal* said to *David*, 2 Sam. 6. 20. they uncover themselves in the eyes of carnall minded men, as a foole uncovers himselfe: they shew themselves envious, covetous, selfe-conceited, contentious one with another, censorious and such like, even in the sight of the wicked, that they are able justly to taxe them with these and the like faults.

Oh remember thou hast taken on thee the profession of the Gospell, and wouldest beare the name of a true Christian: thou must walke wisely even towards them that are without: in thy whole carriage in thy words and deedes, thou must have regard to the right end, Gods glorie, and the good of others: and thou must take heede thou give no just cause of exception or offence, by any thing thou saist, or doest, no not to the wicked and unbelieving: yea, thou must bee so wise in thy carriage, and thy behaviour among them, as that sometimes thou must forbear the doing of some lawfull thing so farre as may stand with the keeping of faith and a good conscience, if so bee, thou in thy Christian wisdom and discretion perceive, that the doing of it will hinder some great good that may otherwise be done.

We have example of this in *Paul*, Acts 19. 10. Hee was full two yeeres in *Ephesus* an Idolatrous citie, and saw their Idolatrous worship of *Diana*: yet all that while he kept silence, and spake not a word in particular against *Diana* (as he might have done) onely in generall termes hee said, as it is in the speech of *Demetrius*, verse 26, That they were no gods which were made with hands. And this did *Paul* forbear to doe, that hee might doe some good in that Citie by preaching of the Gospell, which could not have been suffered if hee had spoken against *Diana* in particular.

Vse.

Many professors of the Gospell justly taxed for behaving themselves unwisely in the sight of the wicked and prophane.

Note.

3. Things are to be considered, serving, to stirre up true professors of the Gospell to carrie themselves wisely in the sight of the wicked.

I

And thus must thou that art a true professor of the Gospell doe sometimes: and let it never bee justly said of thee that wouldest carrie the name of a true Christian, that thou art as covetous, as unquiet (once angry) as hard to be appeased, as mercilesse, as ready to catch, as idle, as censorious and judging, as those that make no profession at all; let none of these things, or the like, bee truly affirmed of thee, let not the wicked bee able justly to charge them upon thee.

2

And to that end consider: First, that if thou carrie thy selfe so unwisely, and so without Christian discretion, as thou givest; ist cause of exception, or offence, thou dost expose thy selfe to the malice of the wicked, and (as it were) inclose thy selfe within their hands: and if the wicked bee so bold, as that they will assault the names of the harmelesse with obstructions and slanders, how will they insult over thee, having just advantage against thee?

3

Againe, consider that by thy evill and unwise behaviour in the sight of the wicked thou dost not only expose thy selfe to contempt, but even the Gospell it selfe, which thou dost professe, to scorne and reproch; and through thy unwise behaviour the name of God is blasphemed, and those among the wicked of whom there remained some hope, are cast further off, and left without all hope to be recovered. Thus speaks the Lord by his Prophet Ezekiel 36.20. and the Apostle cites it Rom. 2.24.

And remember further, that thou bearing the name of a true Christian, by thy godly, wise, and wary conversation among the wicked, God is glorified, 1 Pet. 2.12. the doctrine of God our Saviour is adorned, Tit. 2.10. and many times unbelievers are wrought upon, and wonne as the Apostle saith in one particular; Let wives bee subject to their husbands, that even they which obey not the word, may bee wonne by the conversation of the wives, 1 Pet. 3.1. Oh then, thou that dost, or wouldest carry the name of a true Christian, be thou carefull to walke wisely toward them that are without, let thy words and deeds be ordered by Christian wisdom: in all thy speeches, and actions, have an eye to Gods glory, and the good of others, and take thou diligent heed, that nothing bee said, or done by thee, that may give just advantage to the wicked to speak evill of thee, and to throw disgrace vpon thy holy profession.

Note.

In the next place, we are to marke, that the Apostle saith not, *Walk wisely with them, but toward them that are without*; it is one thing to walke with unbelievers, and another to walke toward them: there is great difference betweene these two. To walke with any, is to walke as they doe, and to hold on the same kind and course of life that they doe: but to walke toward others, is to live among them, and as occasion is offered, to have businesse and dealing with them.

Doct. 2.

Though wee are to eschew the corruption and bad manners of the wicked, yet we are not to avoid all manner of dealing with them. Reasons why the Lord will have his children live among the wicked.

Hence then wee may gather thus much: That howsoever wee are not to walke with the wicked, we are not to doe as they doe, nor to follow their trade and manner of life, yet wee may live among them, and have businesse, trading and dealing with them, as occasion is offered: howsoever wee are to eschew the corruptions and bad manners of the wicked, yet wee are not altogether to avoyd all manner of dealing with them. The Apostle hath taught us, Phil. 2.15. that we are to live blamelesse and pure, as the sonnes of God without rebuke, but where? apart from all wicked and ungodly men? no: in the midst of a naughty and crooked nation, among whom wee ought to shine as lights, and that in the world, even in the throng of wicked men, and unbelievers. The Lord will have his children to live among the wicked, as Lot did in Sodom.

First that they may spend their time, their strength, and all their abilities of body and mind, for the common good of all, as the Apostle saith, 1 Pet. 4.10. Let every man as hee hath received the gift, minister the same to another, as good disposers, of the manifold grace of God.

Secondly,

Secondly, for the exercise of their faith, their wisdom, and other graces that are in them, and for triall of their strength in striving against sinne, that their faith and other graces may bee exercised, and that they may be tried what is in them, whether they will cleave to the Lord with a perfect heart, or bee carried aside with the corruption of the world: for that is indeede true resistance of sinne, and victory over it, most victorious, when wee conflicting and grappling with many occasions and allurements to it, strive against it, and overcome it: and hee is truly good, who is good among such as bee evill: if *Ioseph* had not beene tempted to folly by his Mistrisse, his chastity had not beene so great and glorious.

The Lord therefore will have us live in the world, among the wicked of the world, in the midst of many means and provocations to evill, that the strength of Gods grace that is in us may bee knowne: and this doctrine might bee applied to shew the error of some of ancient time, and of some of our time, who refuse to live in any fellowship with notorious sinfull men: and I might hereby shew the error of the Monkes and Voraries among the Papists, who thinke it a state of perfection to live like drones fattening themselves in a cloister, apart from all society of men: but I rather chuse to shew the limitation of this truth that it be not misconceived of us: and touching the limits of it, know wee that it is thus confined,

Wee may live among the wicked, onely as wee stand in some relation with them and as we are conjoynd with them by some bond of nature, of office, of place or habitation: for the corruption of men must not drive us from our station and from performance of Christian duties that concerne us in our places and callings: As the Lord hath called every one, so let him walke, 1 Cor. 7. 17.

And againe, wee may have dealing with the wicked, onely as just occasion is offered: we may not (hand over head) live with all sort of wicked persons, and carelesly thrust our selves into any wicked company, and thinke as the foolish Familiars doe, or as Drunkards and epicures doe, that it is no matter into what company wee come, wee have no warrant for that: And there is great danger in so doing, there is no disease so contagious, nor sicknesse so infectious, as is the ill behaviour of the wicked, if we sort our selves with them: and there is no age sexe or complexion, so apt to catch and take a disease from another, as are the best of Gods children, to take hurt by the company of wicked persons: and therefore we are not to live among them, but according to the limit of our owne particular places and callings, nor to have dealings with them, but as just occasion shall be offered unto us.

In the last place it is not to be omitted, that those who have not heard, or not received the Gospel, are here said to be without: wherein the Church is compared to Gods Kingdome, Citie or House: true beleivers to the subjects, citizens and household of God, and unbelievers to strangers, and such as have no part nor portion among them.

Here then appears the wretched and cursed condition of wicked men and unbelievers: they are disioyned from God, the fountaine of all true happinesse and comfort, they have no fellowship with God, or the people of God Ephes. 2. 12. they are without Christ, and are aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, and have no hope, and are without God in the world: Yea, wicked persons, such as beleve not, so long as they continue in that state, stand subject to the whole wrath of God. Oh that they had hearts to consider their fearefull condition: thou that art a drunkard, a swearer, a prophane person, consider thy cursed state, as yet thou art severed from Gods comfortable presence, thou art shut out from all benefit of Gods promises of life and salvation, thou hast no part nor title to the blessings of God, belonging to the Saints of God, and that is a beginning of hellish

Vse.

Some briefly taxed, who refuse to live in any fellowship with notorious sinfull men. The godly may live among the wicked, only as they stand in some relation with them.

Nota.

The godly may have dealings with the wicked, only as just occasion is offered.

Dott. 3.

Wicked men and unbelievers are in a most miserable state and condition.

Vse.

Wicked persons are to consider their fearefull condition, and to hasten out of it as soone as possibly they may.

torment; for finall separation from God, and an apprehension of his wrath is hell it selfe.

Now such is the case of all men, that doe not yet truly beleeve in Christ: and such are they that live in the practice of any knowne sinne, yea think on it, thou that art a wicked man, and an unbeliever; thou art so farre disioyned from God by thy sinne, as there is greater enmity, and contrariety betwene God and thee, than betwene fire and water, light and darknesse: and if God be against thee, then who can stand for thee? nay God being thine enemy, all the judgements of God attend thee, all the creatures of God are armed against thee, and thou liest open to eternall wee and misery. Oh then enter into a serious consideration of thy miserable state and condition, and pray to the Lord, that by the light of his word, and power of his spirit, thine eyes may be open to see that miserie, and (seeing it maist) be humbled for it, and hasten out of it, and never rest till thou be sure thou dost truly beleeve in Iesus Christ, and then without question thou shalt bee in Gods favour, and bee one of his owne house and family, and have communion and fellowship with God, and with the Saints of God, and that is a most blessed state and condition: thou shalt then have peace with God, with thine owne conscience, with all the faithfull, yea with all the creatures in the world.

The stones of the field shall be in league with thee, and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee, Iob 5. 23. thou shalt have access to the throne of grace with boldnesse, and come into Gods house with joy and gladnesse: thou shalt have title to all the blessings of Gods Saints in this life, and right to eternall happinesse in the life to come.

Labour thou therefore for this above all things, and count all things losse, in the respect of this, that thou maist winne Christ, and bee found in him, and by him bee conioyned with God, and the Church of God, and bee partaker of all the comforts and blessings that belong to Gods Saints.

Now to the last words of this verse. (*And redeeme the time*) the Apostle having required of the Colossians by way of exhortation, generally, that they should walke wisely toward those that are without, in these words (*redeeme the time*) he shewes how they may so doe, and wherein especially standeth their godly, wise, discreet and wary walking towards them that are without, namely in or by redeeming the time: for these words (*redeeme the time*) are not (as they seeme) a distinct precept, or an exhortation by it selfe, but are to be conceived as expressing the manner of wise walking toward them that are without: the originall text shewes it plainly, for thus runne the words, walke wisely toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

The word here translated (*time*) properly signifieth opportunity or present occasion, that present fit time, wherein any thing to bee done, may bee done fitly and happily: and it is here to be understood with relation to the good that may bee done even for that fit opportunity, and fit occasion offered of well-doing: and the word (*redeeme*) in the proper and naturall signification of it, signifies to buy some things backe againe, and it is heere used metaphorically by way of similitude: it is taken from the custome and practice of wise marchants, or tradesmen, who use to buy their commodities while fit time of buying serves and while the market holds: and having (haply) had great losses, or formerly spent their time idly or unthrifly, doe afterwards come to redeeme, and (as it were) to buy backe againe the time that is past, not that they are able to call backe againe any one minute of time past, that is impossible, but by their most carefull and diligent imploying of the present fit time of gaining, that is offered to them, by using (in that opportunity) more than ordinary diligence, for recovering of their losses, even then breaking of their sleepe, and abiding of themselves of lawfull refreshing and delights, they doe as much

business

The happy condition of such as truly beleeve in Iesus Christ.

Interpretation.

business in that same time, as they might have done both in that, and in the time formerly mis-spent, if they used onely ordinary diligence: and so to redeeme that opportunity and fit occasion offered of doing good, and of well-doing signifieth two things.

First, to observe, take, and use it being offered, and not to let it slip, and passe away without using of it.

And secondly, to use it with more than ordinary diligence, yea, to use it with losse of our owne pleasures and profits.

Thus then wee are to conceive these words, as if the Apostle had said to the Colossians: Observe, take and use the opportunity, and fit occasion of well doing, when it is offered: yea, use it with more than ordinary diligence, even with losse of your owne pleasures and profits.

Now here first, in that the Apostle saith walke wisely to them that are without subjoyning (as shewing the manner how they may so doe) (*redeem the time*) or (redeeming the time) I might hence note thus much. That we the wiser ourselves wise Christians, such as carry our selves wisely among them that are without: if so be we omit no opportunity of well doing, but on that I will not stand, but rather on a positive point, the duty hence offered, namely this.

That the time and opportunity of doing good, both in respect of our selves, and others, is not to bee neglected, and let passe, when it is offered: wee are to observe the time and opportunity of doing good, and to take it, and use it, when it is offered unto us. When we have opportunity for the practice of the duties of piety, or for the doing of any good, wee may not foreflow it, and let it slip away from us: and this hath our Saviour taught us plainly, Ioh. 12. 35. where he saith, yet a little while is the light with you, walk while ye have light, lest the darknesse come upon you, for hee that walketh in the darke knoweth not whether he goeth: as if hee had sayd, you have now opportunity, and fit time to walke as ye ought, having light to direct you, looke that you use it, while you have it, and let it not passe away from you, lest that being gone, and darknesse coming on you, you know not then whither ye goe; Gal. 6. 10. saith the Apostle, while wee have time let us doe good unto all men.

Let us not suffer any good occasion of doing good to others slip away from us, but let us take hold of it, while it is offered, and so in one particular the holy Ghost bids us, Heb. 3. 13. exhort one another while it is called to day: and to these I might adde many other testimonies, for the prooffe of this point. Ierem. 8. 7. the Lord complained of his people, that they did not observe and use the time of grace and mercy, for the amendment of their lives when it was offered unto them, yea, in that respect hee prefers the very bruite beasts before them (saith he) the Scourge in the aire knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle and the Crane, and the Swallow, observe the time of their coming, but my people knoweth not the iudgement of the Lord, they observe not, neither use the time of grace and mercy for the amendment of their lives: so that we see by plaine evidence of Scripture that we are not to neglect and let passe the opportunity offered unto us, for the exercise of piety, or for the doing of any good whatsoever.

The reason and ground of this is: Because indeed, as the Lord in his eternall counsell hath ordained things to be done, so hath he appointed the opportunity and time wherein each thing should bee done; wee are therefore to observe, and to take, and use that time and that opportunity of doing good, either in respect of our selves or others, which the Lord doth vouchsafe and offer to us, and that wee may rightly conceive this point, and draw it to some profitable use.

Wee must learne and marke a difference of good things that are to bee done by us: some are such good things as reach not to all times of this life, such as are

Doff. 4.

The time and opportunity of doing good both in respect of our selves and others, is to be taken and used when it is offered.

A difference of good things that are to bee done by us is to be observed

not to bee done at all times, but are limited to some particular time, and are to bee done in some particular time and season, as hearing and reading the word of God, and reading other good bookes, conference, set and solemne prayer, giving good counsell, admonition, reproofe, giving almes and the like.

Though these be good things, that wee are to doe, yet the doing of them, is not bound to all times, and so the opportunity of doing these things, and the like, is onely then when the Lord doth vouchsafe us means, and ability, and just occasion in respect of time, place, person, and other circumstances. Other good things there be that we are bound to doe, which extend and reach over the whole life, and are to be continuall acts, to be performed in every part, and time of our lives, from the doing of which, no part of our life is exempted: as (namely) the exercise of faith, and repentance, of amendment of our lives, of working out our owne salvation with feare and trembling, of seeking reconciliation with God, yea though we have assurance of salvation.

And the opportunity of the doing these and the like things, is every instant and present time, even every moment of our lives, is the opportunity given us for the amendment and reformation of our lives, yet more speciall opportunities vouchsafed unto us, for the doing of these things? For our turning to God, for our seeking reconciliation with God and the like, is that time of the Lords gracious visitation, as our Saviour calles it, Luke 19. 44. That acceptable time, and that day of salvation, as the Apostle calls it, 2 Cor. 6. 2. (that is) that time wherein the Lord doth offer us merke in the ministry of his word, wherein he stands at the doore of our hearts, and knocks by the sound of his word outwardly, and by the motions of his spirit inwardly, shewing us our finnes, and mooving us to repentance, yea that time wherein the Lord calles us to repentance by his mercies, by his judgements, by his patience and long sufferance: thus then wee are to conceive the doctrine now laid before us.

Wee are to observe the opportunity and fit time of doing good, and to take that opportunity when it is offered unto us, (that is) we are to observe and mark when the Lord doth vouchsafe us means, to doe good, and just occasion in regard of time, place, person, &c. for the doing of any good thing that is limited to some particular time and to take that opportunity when it is offered, and to use it, and not to let it slip, and we are to observe every part and time of our life, as fit for repentance and amendment of our lives; but especially, the time of the Lords gracious visitation of us, by the Ministry of the word, and when the Lord calles us to repentance by mercies, or by judgements, and to take hold of that opportunity, and to use it, and not to suffer it to passe away from us.

And now to come a little neerer to our selves, I may say to us, as the Apostle did in that, 2 Cor. 6. 2. Behold now the accepted time, behold now the day of salvation: the Lord hath a long time, and doth still vouchsafe to visit us with his word and Gospell, and hath seconded the same both with his mercies, and his judgments. This then is that opportunity, this is that fit time of repentance, and turning from our finnes to God, in amendment of our lives, and of doing good to our selves: Let us take notice of it, and observe it; yea, let every one of us in particular observe it; doe thou observe, and take hold of this opportunity of the good of thy soule while it is offered, thou knowest not how soone it may be taken from thee.

First, if Christ now knocke at the doore of thine heart, by the preaching of the Gospell, and by his mercies and judgements, and thou deferre to open unto him, and to let him in, and let slip the opportunity of turning from thy sinne to God, in amendment of thy life; haply heereafter thou maist pine away with a desire of having him, and yet not finde him, nor any place to repentance; remember that exhortation of the Prophet, Isai. 55. chapter, vers. 6. *See ye the Lord*

Vse.

We are to observe the Lords gracious visitation of us by the ministerie and preaching of the Gospell, and to make use of it for our good while it is offered.

2. Motives to stirre us up to observe the time of the Lords gracious visitation of us by the preaching of his Gospell, and to make use of it while we have it.

Lord while hee may be found, and call yee upon him while he is nere. There will come a time wherein the Lord will not be found: yea, a time will come which hee threatneth, Proverbs 1.24. when such as now regard not, but despise his calling unto them, shall crie to him in their miserie, and he will not heare them, but laugh at their destruction: which is a fearefull sentence, as one saith, The Lords laughter is more to be feared, than his anger. Therefore take heed thou let not slip that opportunitie of doing good to thine owne soule that is yet offered unto thee.

Againe, consider the wisdome of men in matters of the world: the Seafaring man he observeth the winde, and the weather, and takes the opportunitie of the time: the Traveller hee takes the day before him and travels whiles it is light: the Smith he strikes the iron while it is hot, when it is cold it is too late to strike, yea every man of yeeres and discretion, will consider the opportunitie offered for the well-doing of his businesse, and hee will condemne himselfe if hee let it slip: and wilt thou then bee more carelesse in spirituall matters, and more absurdly foolish in things concerning thine owne everlasting good? Oh consider thou the opportunitie that is offered to thee for the good of thy soule; observe thou the fit time of well-doing, which the Lord doth vouchsafe thee, and when the Lord doth vouchsafe thee the benefit of his word, and many mercies, both common to thee with others, and peculiar to thy selfe, and hee sends his judgements to warne both thee and others: know thou, that that is thy opportunitie of turning from thy finnes, and amendment of life, observe it, take hold of it, let it not slip from thee, but use it so, as it may bee for Gods glorie, and the comfort of thine owne soule.

From these words (*redeeming the time*) understood as before they were expounded, we are further taught thus much: *to use the time well.*

That in using the opportunitie of well-doing, wee are to bee like wise Merchants or Tradesmen: A wise Merchant or Tradesman having heretofore lost time of gaining, hee will (as it were) buy it backe againe, by his more than ordinarie diligence, when time serves him againe: so must we doe in respect of the opportunitie and time of well-doing offered unto us, wee must gaine the time wee have formerly lost by negligence, with double diligence: yea, wee must redeeme it with losse of our ease, our pleasures, and our profits, 1 Pet. 4. 3. *It is sufficient* (saith the Apostle) *for us that we have spent the time past of the life, after the lust of the Gentiles, walking in wantonnesse, in fits, drunkennesse, in gluttonies, drinkings, and in abominable idolatries.*

Wee are to consider our former mis-spent time, and not to mis-spend any more, but rather to gaine and recover that which hath been lost with future diligence in well-doing. Psalme 119. verf. 32. David saith, *I will runne the way of thy Commandements, when thou shalt enlarge mine heart*: where wee see David promiset that his heart being set at libertie, being set free by grace from the bondage and dominion of his owne naturall corruption, hee would not walke and keepe an ordinarie pace in the waies of Gods Commandements, but hee would runne in them, hee would make more than ordinarie speede in well-doing, and so redeeme the time formerly lost. Thus must every one whose heart is free from the bondage of sinne, if thou perswade thy selfe, the Lord hath wrought in thee by his Spirit, and set thee free from the dominion and power of thy naturall corruption, thou must runne the waies of Gods Commandements, thou must gaine time of well-doing with double diligence: it must bee farre from thee to spend thy time, in trifles, and pastime, and after the manner of the world, in vaine delights drive away dumpe, though indeede lawfull recreation may bee used, if it bee used lawfully, and at times meete and convenient, to make us more fit for good duties: yet thou must take heede thy heart bee not entangled with the pleasures of this life, remember thou, this time

Doct. 5.

In using the opportunitie of well-doing wee must be like wise Merchants or tradesmen, we must gaine the time formerly lost by our negligence, by double diligence.

Vse.

It must be far from true believers to spend their time in trifles, and after the manner of the world, they must use more than ordinary diligence in doing good things.

Note.

Two motives
to stir us up to
redeeme the
time of doing
good with the
losse of our
owne ease,
pleasures, and
profits.

1

2

time well passed, is the best pastime, and thou that art a true believer, and free from the power of sinne, thou must use more than ordinarie diligence in doing of good things, thou must not content thy selfe to heare the Word, to pray, or to doe other good things, as meere naturall men use to doe them: that is, so as may stand with their credit in the world; with their ease and worldly profit: if hearing of a Sermon crosse their worldly commoditie, they will loose of that, thou must not so doe: no, no, thou must redeeme the opportunitie and time of doing good, thou must buy it with a price, even with the losse of thine owne ease, pleasure, and profit.

And to helpe thee forward, and to stirre thee up to the practice of this dutie: consider with me only these two things.

First, marke what the Apostle saith, Tit. chap. 2. vers. 14. *Christ gave himselfe for us, that hee might redeeme us from all iniquities, and purge us to himselfe a peculiar people zealous of good works.* Whence we may gather, that if thou be not zealous of good works, if thou bee not studious and careful in doing good, if thou use not more than ordinarie paines to doe well, and if thou redeeme not time in well-doing, thou canst have no sound assurance, that thou art redeemed by Christ.

Againe, consider thus much, thou must one day come to bee accounted for the spending of thy time, and if thou doe not number thy daies, and redeeme the time, and spend the opportunitie of well-doing, with more than ordinarie diligence, thou wilt be farre from a good account, and the Lord will judge thee as an unthrifte servant that hath not gained by thy talent: If then thou wouldest have sound and comfortable assurance, that thou art redeemed by Christ, and if thou wouldest bee able to make a good account of the spending of thy time before the Iudge of all the world, and have it said to thee, as it is Mat. 25. 21. *Well done good and faithfull servant, come thou into thy masters joy,* then looke thou redeeme the time of doing good; doe not thou onely observe, take, and use the opportunitie of well-doing, but use it with more than ordinarie paines and diligence; even with losse of thine owne ease, pleasure, and profit: and if thou so gaine time, no doubt thou shalt then bee richly rewarded with gaine and glorie in the day wherein the Lord shall come to take account of his servants.

Verf. 6. *Let your speech be gracious alwaies, and powdered with salt, that ye may know how to answer every man.*

IN this verse our Apostle comes to exhort the Colossians to carrie themselves wisely toward them that are without, in one particular thing, namely, in the wise usage of their speech, because (indeede) in wise ordering of the speech, spirituall wisdom is singularly discovered, and withall, holy and gracious speech is an usuall and very effectuall way and means of doing good upon them that are without, and of winning them: therefore the Apostle doth particularly exhort therunto.

The generall parts of this verse are two.

First, a dutie touching the right ordering of speech, propounded by way of exhortation in these words, *Let your speech be gracious.*

1 Which exhortation is further enlarged by the extent of that dutie, in respect of time, that their speech should be gracious *alwaies.*

2 And then, by a similitude, wherein gracious speech is compared to meat powdered and well seasoned, in these words, *and powdered with salt.*

The second part of the verse is a declaration of the end, wherefore the Colossians should looke that their speech was gracious, namely this, that so they might

might know how to answer every man, expressed in the last words, *That ye may know how to answer every man.*

Of these in order.

First therefore, of the exhortation: *Let your speech be gracious alwayes and powdered with salt.*

In the originall the words runne thus: *Let your speech be alwayes in grace powdered with salt:* Which sentence standing upon a comparison, is in generall thus to be conceived: *Let your speech be seasoned with grace, as other things are with salt:* wherein the Apostle compares gracious speech to flesh, or fish, or other things that are powdered. Now (as wee know) things that are powdered with salt, are not onely by that powdring kept from rottenness, and putrefaction, but they also taste of that seasoning, and are made more savourie, and pleasing to the taste of those that eat them, they are made both wholesome, and savourie: so would the Apostle have speech and communication, not onely by grace to be kept from rottenness, and corruption, that so it be not rotten speech, as hee speaks, Ephesians 4. verf. 29. but that it also bee so seasoned with grace, as that it carry with it the taste of grace, and even expresse the grace that is within the heart, and that it be good and profitable to the hearers, and apt to engender and worke some grace in the hearts and mindes of them that heare it: for (indeed) speech is, or may be said to be gracious, or seasoned with grace, when it expresseth some grace, that is in the heart of the speaker, and when it is also apt to worke some grace in the hearts of those that heare it, as the Apostle saith, Ephes. 4. 29. *When it is good to the use of edifying, and doth minister grace to the hearers.*

Thus then wee are to understand this exhortation: Let your speech, your talke, and communication one with another bee so seasoned with grace, as other things are with salt, as that it bee not onely thereby kept from rottenness, and corruption, but it savour of grace, and expresse that grace that is within in the heart, and that it be also fit to worke grace in those that heare it.

Not to speake of that which is offered to us from this verse, considered together with the former: the Apostle heere exhorting the Colossians to carrie themselves wisely toward them that are without, particularly in regard of their speech, and so implying, that holie and gracious speech, serves much for the good of our selves, and others, wee shall have occasion to speake of that afterwards.

In the first place, wee have in this exhortation this dutie plainly laid before us: That our speech must bee gracious, it must bee seasoned with the salt of grace, it must savour of grace, as powdered meates doe of salt, and it must bee a manifesting, and an expresse of the grace that is within, wrought in our hearts.

And hence it is that the Preacher saith, Ecclesiastes 10. 12. *That the words of the mouth of a wise man have grace:* and Proverbs 15. 2. *Salomon saith, The tongue of the wise useth knowledge:* that is, the wise person speaks in such sort, as that his speech doth shew forth grace: and we have example of this in our Saviour Christ, Luk. 4. 22. where wee finde it said, that hee spake with an evidence, and plaine demonstration of grace, that the people wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.

And the reason of this (that our speech must be seasoned with grace, and savour of grace that is within) is plaine: namely this.

Because not onely the heart and the inward faculties of the soule must bee sanctified, but the tongue also, and the outward parts of the body: grace and holiness must not be onely within, but it must also spread and stretch it selfe to all the parts of the body: yea to all the actions and operations of every part and member of the body, else is there no true sanctification. Therefore the speech,

Interpre-
tation.

Dott. 1.
Our speech
must be sea-
soned with the
salt of grace,
and savour of
grace, as pow-
dred meates
doe of salt.

Reason.

Five speciall
graces where-
with our
speech must
be seasoned,
and whereof
it must taste
and favour.

I.
A reverend
regard of God
and men.

2
Modesty.

3
Meeknesse.

4
Sinceritie.

speech, which is the exercise of the tongue, must be seasoned with grace, and must favour of grace.

Now that wee may better conceive this dutie, we must know that there bee many particular graces, that are to be sprinkled upon our speeches, as salt upon meate, and wherewith it must bee seasoned, and whereof it must taste, and favour, but especially these five: namely,

A reverend regard both of God and men.

Modestie.

Meeknesse.

Sinceritie.

And a due regard of the good name of others.

I will speake of them a little further in order briefly.

First, our speech must be seasoned with a reverend regard of God, if we have occasion to use his names and titles, as Lord, God, &c. or those things whereby he is knowne to us, as his attributes, his ordinances, his creatures, his judgments, &c. wee are to use them with all reverence of his great name, and with feare of his glorious majestie, Deut. 28. 58. and contrarie to this, is light and carelesse using of any of his titles in our common talke and communication, customeable swearing, and forswearing, blaspheming, cursing, making jests of Scripture phrase, and the like.

Againe, our speech must bee seasoned with a reverend regard of men: in our speaking of men, and to men, we are to expresse a regard of that which is to bee revered in them, as namely, the image of God, and especially the renovation of his image, and if they be above us in age, gifts, place, &c. then to speake of them, and to them, with iust titles of reverence, as Anna did, who being rebuked by Eli, answered him with reverence, and said, *Nay my Lord*, 1 Sam. 1. 15. I might shew this in other examples.

Contrary to this, is scoffing, cursing, and deriding speech, and unreverend speaking of men, and to men.

Secondly, our speech must be seasoned with modestie, and that is thus: If we be to mention good things, that are in us, or good things done by us, tending to our commendation, wee are to speake of them with modestie, and so as wee rather extenuate them, than boast of them, as Paul did, 1 Cor. 15. 9. *I am the least of the Apostles, which am not meete to be called an Apostle.* If wee be to mention things that may move blushing, wee are to utter them in as seemely words as possibly may be.

Contrary to this is boasting and vain-glorious speaking of our selves forbidden, Proverbs 27. 2. *Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth:* and contrary to modestie in speaking, is also filthie, obscene and unchaste speaking forbidden by the Apostle, chap. 3. vers 8. *But put away even all these things, wrath, anger, maliciousnesse, cursed speaking, filthy speaking out of your mouth.*

Thirdly, our speech must bee seasoned with meeknesse: we are to answer or reprove those that any way offend us, with meeknesse, with calme and quiet speech, free from passion and perturbation: 1 Pet. 3. 9. *Be courteous (saith the Apostle) not rendering evil for evil, neither rebuke for rebuke.*

Contrary to this is miscalling, rating and reviling one another.

Fourthly, our speech must be seasoned with sinceritie: wee are to speake the truth sincerely, or at least that we thinke to be the truth, and wee are to deale plainly and sincerely with others in speaking of their finnes, when iust occasion is offered, to tell them of their finnes: Ephes. 4. 25. *Speake every man the truth unto his neighbour.* Levit. 19. 17. *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, but thou shalt plainly rebuke thy neighbour, and suffer him not to sinne.*

Contrary to this, are lying, glosing, dissembling, and flattering speeches, speeches that sooth up men in their sins, or extoll them above measure, whereof

David

David speaks, Psalme 12.2. *They speake deceitfully every one with his neighbour, flattering with their lips, and speake with a double heart.*

Last of all, our speech must be seasoned with care of other mens good name, wee are to speake of the sayings or doings of other men in private, charitably, either speaking of them, as little as may be, if they bee evill, or interpreting all in the better part, if they bee doubtfull, and where there is no evident cause to the contrary, which is an especiall fruit of charity, as the Apostle shewes. 1 Cor. 13.7. *Love beleeveeth all things, it hopeth all things, it endureth all things.*

The contrary to this is rash speaking, and censuring of the sayings and doings of others, slandering, secret whispering abroad the faults of another, tale-bearing, forbidden, Levit. 19. 16. *Thou shalt not walke about with tales among thy people.*

Wee see then how wee are to conceive the dutie propounded namely thus : our speech must be seasoned with grace, and it must savour of grace, that is, it must expresse a reverend regard both of God and man, it must bee a manifestation of our modestie, meeknesse, sinceritie, and a due regard of the good name of others.

Now then if wee examine our selves touching this dutie, how farre will many of us bee found from that grace that ought to be in our speeches ? are there not many that are so farre from seasoning of their speech with a reverend regard of the great names of the Lord, as that they carelesly use them in their common talke, and upon every trifling occasion use to say, O Lord, O God, O Iesus, &c.

And is the number of those few, that powder their speech not with grace, but with oathes, blasphemies, and cursings ? I wish it were not so : but alas, the number of such is exceeding great, many there bee that scarce speake a word, but they powder it with an oath : yea, little children so soone as they are able to speake, their moutnes are full of oathes, they learne them (no doubt) of their elders : and this is so common a sinne, as wee may justly say as the Prophet did, Jerem. 23. verf. 20. *Because of oathes the land mourneth :* and are there not many whose moutnes are full of scoffing, scorning, and reproachfull speeches ? and as for seasoning our speech with modestie, meeknesse, sinceritie, and due regard of others good name, are there not many whose moutnes runne over with ribald and filthie speaking, with railing, reviling, with lying, dissembling, flattering, with uncharitable censuring, with slandering, secret whispering, with tale-bearing ? as the Apostle saith, 1 Timoth. 5. 13. *some goe about from house to house,* and are praters, and clacke in every corner, whatsoever they know, and so are sowers of dissention, and makers of strife.

Well, let us take notice of our sinne : and know whosoever thou art, that art guiltie of sinne in any of these kindes, thou art so farre from gracious speech, as that thy speech is gracelesse and wicked.

And as they that have their speech powdered with grace have testimonie to their comfort, that their hearts are seasoned with the spirit of grace : so thou hast evidence and testimonie to thy terror, that the divell fire and rules in thy heart, and that thy tongue is set on fire of hell, 1 Iam. 3. 6. Consider therefore thy fearefull condition, and the greatnesse of thy sinne, and now whilest that thou hast time, be thou humbled for it, and labour hence-forward to have thy speech seasoned with grace, and favouring of grace : and to that end consider with me further what Salomon saith, Prov. 20. 19. *There is gold, and a multitude of precious stones : but the lips of knowledge are a precious Jewell.* As if hee had said : the greatest heape of gold and precious stones, is not to be compared with gracious words, and speech seasoned with grace.

And againe : Prov. 13. 2. *A man shall eat good things by the fruits of his mouth :* what bee those good things that a man shall eat as the fruite of his gracious speech ? Surely, the good will of good men : yea, as Salomon saith, Prov. 22. 1. *Of great*

5
Care of other
mens good
name.

Vse.
Reproofe of
such persons as
many waies
utter forth
unfavourie
speeches.

Four motives
to stirre us up
to have our
speech season-
ed with grace

great men, and Gods blessing: these two are the precious fruits which good and gracious speeches bring forth: as on the contrarie, speech wanting grace, is like stinking flesh, and it is loathsome and odious to God and good men: if therefore thou wouldest have testimonie to thy comfort, that thy heart is seasoned with grace; if thou wouldest bee enriched with that which is better than gold, or precious stones; if thou wouldest not utter that which is hatefull to God, and loathsome to all good men; and if thou desire the good will of men, and Gods blessing on thee, then bee thou carefull to have thy speech seasoned with grace, never rest till thou finde that thy speech is the very image and lively picture of grace, carrying in it and expressing a reverend regard of God and men, modestie, meekenesse, sinceritie and a due regard of the good name of others.

From this exhortation, *Let your speech bee gracious and powdered with salt* we are further taught thus much:

That our speech must not onely be a manifestation of grace that is within, in our hearts, but it must bee fit also to worke grace and some good effect in those that heare it: and to this purpose speakes the Apostle plainly, Eph. 4. 29. *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouthes: but that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.* As if he had said, that which is sound, good, and gracious, and serveth to the use of edifying, and ministering grace unto the hearers. Our speech must bee speech of faith, of hope, of love, of the feare of God, of patience, of comfort, of admonition, of good counsell and the like.

May we not speake of worldly matters?

Yes doubtlesse, wee may, so as our speeches therein favour of grace, and bee for the good of one another: our speeches must bee such, as are fit to minister grace, and good to the hearers; there is no place for fond and foolish talke, for idle and fruitlesse words. Our Saviour saith, that of such words wee shall give an account at the day of judgement, Matth. 12. 36. And if wee repent not, even for them, we shall be condemned. Our speech must bee such, as may yeeld some good taste, and effect some good in those that heare it: yea, it must bee alwaies such, as the Apostle here saith: *Let your speech be gracious alwaies.* Haply some will speake religiously, at such time as they are pinched by affliction, then they will speake religiously, and graciously, or before gracious companie, and yet at other times, and before other persons, let loose the bridle of their tongues. But a true beleever must alwaies season his speech with grace, and; if hee doe it not at all times, and customarily, hee doth it not for conscience sake: and therefore looke that thy speech be ever seasoned with grace, and such as is fit to minister some good to the hearers: and that it may be so, observe these two rules.

First, premeditate and forethinke what is fit to bee spoken for the good of others, and let thine heart guide thy mouth, as it is Prov. 16. 23.

Secondly, sanctifie and offer up thy speeches to God in prayer: pray that the Lord would guide thy tongue, and set a watch before thy mouth, and then (doubtlesse) thou shalt be able to utter gracious words, such as are seasoned and favour of grace, and thou shalt then adde doctrine to thy lips, Prov. chapter 16. vers. 23, thou shalt so speake, as that others shall be bettered by thy speech.

Now to the second generall part of this verse: that is, the declaration of it, to what end the Colossians should looke that their speech should bee gracious, expressed in these words: *That ye may know how to answer every man.*

I will briefly deliver the sense and meaning of the words.

That ye may know] That is, that yee may attaine unto wisdom and discretion, and may bee able to know how with wisdom and discretion to answer every man. The word (*answer*) in our common speech hath relation to some question,

Vse. 2

Our speech must not onely be a manifestation of grace that is in our hearts, but it must also be fit to worke grace in those that heare it.

Object.

Ans.

Vse.

There is no place for fond, foolish, idle, and fruitlesse speeches.

Two rules to be observed, serving to make our speech fit to minister some good in the hearers.

question, or demand going before, and to answer (as we know) is to returne speech to a question or demand, according to the purpose and meaning of the question or demand: but here it is used in a larger sense and signification, it signifies to begin and to continue speech whether upon occasion of some question or demand, or otherwise, without occasions ministered by a precedent question or demand.

And here it signifies generally to begin and to continue speech: wee finde the word (*answer*) so used in many places of Scripture! Marth. 11. 25. it is said at that time Iesus answered &c. wee finde in that place, no question nor demand going before, and so the word (*answered*) hath not there respect to any question or demand foregoing, but is put to signifie that which hee began to speake, and say. So Mar. 28. 5. wee finde it is said, that the angell answered, yet notwithstanding there went no question or demand before, and so I might shew it in other places, that the word (*answer*) is many times used according to the Hebrew phrase, and doth generally signifie to begin, and to continue speech, and so it is here used, and is to be taken in that generall sense and signification.

Now because an answer (as we know) is commonly occasioned by a question, or demand from some other man, and is, or ought to be fit, and suitable to the question, or demand, and made according to the purpose, and meaning of him that makes the question, or demand: Therefore the Apostle addes (every man) his meaning is, fitly, and to good purpose, according to the occasion offered from any man. Thus then we are to conceive these words (*that ye may know how to answer every man*) as if the Apostle had said more plainly thus: That you may attaine to wisdom and discretion, and may be able to know how to begin, and how to continue to speake fitly, and to good purpose, according to each occasion, that is offered unto you from any man.

Wee are to marke and observe in the first place, that the Apostle did here exhort the Colossians, that they should have gracious speech in their mouths: that their speech should be ever seasoned with grace, to this end, that they might know both what, and how to speake fitly and to good purpose, upon every occasion.

He saith to them, let your speech bee gracious alwayes, and powdered with salt, that yee may know how to answer every man (that is) how to begin, and how to continue your speech fitly and to good purpose. Hence wee may take up this conclusion: That gracious speech, seasoned with grace, and favouring speech with grace, as it were with salt, shall bee able to know, both what and how to answer every man: by continuall custome and course of speaking holily and graciously, men attaine to spirituall wisdom and discretion, and thereby enabled to speake fitly, and to good purpose upon every occasion.

For why? It is not onely true, that from the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh, Mat. 12. 34. but also from the abundance of the senses, and of the speech the heart thinketh, and according to the speech is the heart affected, and the heart and minde are made either better or worse, and not onely the heart and minde of the hearer, but of the speaker: if the speech be unkind and unseasonable, it not onely infecteth the hearers, but it sends a stinke backe againe to the heart of the speaker, and makes it fouler than it was before: if the speech be kindly and gracious, it is not onely a meane to worke some good, and to minister grace to others, but it doth also minister further grace to the speaker himselfe: and his minde is better framed, and hee more plentifully endued with spirituall wisdom. For (indeed) the Lord doth to bless the use of gracious and religious speech, as it doth bring forth a soundnes and dexterity of

Dott. 3.
Continuall
custome of
speaking holi-
ly brings men
to spirituall
wisdom, and
enables them
to speake fitly,
and to good
purpose upon
every occa-
sion.

judgement thereby a man is better enabled to judge what is most meete to bee spoken and to deliver it in the best manner, and this is grounded on that Parable of the talents, Mat. 25. which being put forth to use, bring forth, or rather bring in as many more, as it is verse 16, 17. If a man use the grace that is in his heart, and expresse it by holy and gracious speeches, he shall gaine, and adde more to it.

Note.

And hence it is that the preaching of the word is held a very effectuall meanes of increasing all manner of grace in the heart of the Preacher. Howsoever some teach others they should not sinne, and yet themselves commit foule finnes, yet it is not possible, but that one, who is indued with faith, and the Spirit of God, should utter gracious speeches, to the edification and good of others, and not to be wonderfully strengthened, and much increased in all manner of spirituall grace himselfe; and in this sense it was that the Apostle said to Timothy, 1. Tim. 4. 15. These things exercise, and give thy selfe unto them, that it may be seene how thou profiteest among all men: and so (doublesse) it cannot bee, but that any, whosoever they be that have grace in their hearts, and use it, and accustome their mouthes to utter gracious speeches, it cannot be (I say) but that they should be able to speake wisely, and to good purpose at all times.

Vse 1.

Such as desire to speak words of comfort in time to a weary soule, must have their mouthes at all other times full of gracious speeches.

Wouldst thou then be able to speake fitly, and to good purpose on every occasion, as in one particular case, in time of distresse, in time of trouble, and vexation of body or minde, wouldst thou be able to speake a word of comfort, and as the Prophet saith, Isai. 50. 4. Know to minister a word in time to him that is weary? Oh then let thy tongue be ever powdered with the salt of grace, have in thy mouth at all other times gracious speeches, and certainly then thou shalt not be to seeke of sweet and comfortable words in time of need. Many come to their friends whom they love well, and wish well unto, in time of their trouble, haply lying on their sicke beds, and are not able to afford them one word of spirituall comfort, onely they can use a common forme of speech, aske them how they doe, and say, they are sorry to see them so, and then they have done: here is one speciall cause of it, their mouthes are not seasoned with gracious speeches at other times; they use not to season their speech with grace at other times, and so it comes to passe that when they should, and (it may be) would use gracious and comfortable words, they cannot frame themselves to them, but even then also, they are out of season with them; learne thou therefore to acquaint thy selfe with holy and religious speeches, let thy mouth at other times be exercised in speaking graciously, and then (doublesse) though though canst not speake so eloquently, as some that foame out nothing but goodly speeches, yet thou shalt be able to speake to better purpose, because (indeed) it is not mans wit, but Gods grace, that seasons speech, and makes it profitable and comfortable.

Note.

Learn to use
to comfort
the sick
the weary
the afflicted

Vse.

Through the use of rotten and corrupt speech men are made unfit to speake to good purpose upon any occasion.

Againe, is it so, that by use and exercise of gracious speeches men are enabled to speake to good purpose upon every occasion? Surely then it followeth on the contrary, that through the use of rotten speech, and of gracelesse speech, men are made unfit to speake to good purpose, upon any occasion; they that accustome their tongues to speake words gratefull to none, but to the devill, and damnable men, what doe they? Surely they make themselves unable to speake to good purpose at any time, and they are not able to speake well, and to good purpose, when there is most need of good speech, as haply when themselves lye on their death beds, they are unable to utter one word of spirituall comfort; but (as the Preacher saith,) Eccles. 10. 12. The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishnesse, and the latter end of his mouth is wicked madness. A wicked man whose mouth is full of wicked gracelesse speeches, his words begin in folly, and for the most part, they end in madness; lamentable experience shewes it, that such accustome their mouthes to utter rotten and corrupt speech

in

'n their life time, when they come to the houre of death, they commonly know not what to speake, or how to utter any word of sound comfort: they either lie like stockes, or stones, or they speake idly, and vainely; and (indeed) it is just with the Lord they should be so punished; as they loved cursing, so shall it come unto them, and as they loved not blessing, so shall it be farre from them. *Psal. 109. 17.* As they loved gracelesse speech in their health, so it is just with the Lord, that in their sickness they should bee able to utter that onely which is gracelesse, and voyd of all true comfort: thinke on this, and consider it, thou that art a common swearer, a railer, or the like: thy words are not wind, they passe not away with thy speaking; no, no, thou that dost belch out bitter blasphemy, and other cursed speeches, thou dost not onely thereby offend God, and grieve Gods children, and make thy selfe liable to the curse of God, as other grievous finnes doe, but thou provokest the Lord to follow thee with his punishment in this particular kind: that as thou hast beene gracelesse in thy speech in thy life time, so thou shouldest not have a word of grace, and sound comfort in thy death; therefore remember thou swearer, thou railer, or the like, by thy swearing, or railing, thou dost even shut up thy owne mouth, that thou shalt not know how to utter one word of comfort in time of thy distresse, and in the houre of death: and as thou dost tender the comfort of thine owne soule, in time of great distresse, put away swearing, railing, and all manner of corrupt and rotten speaking.

Now from the words themselves: in that the Apostle saith here, *that ye may know how to answer every man.*

We are taught in the next place, That a Christian must have in him a knowledge, he must know to speake as occasion is offered, especially if he be demanded any thing pertaing to his Christian faith, and profession. *1. Pet. 3. 15.* *Be ready alwayes to give answer to every man that asketh thee a reason of the hope that is in you.* A Christian must be ever ready and prepared to give an account of his faith, and of his hope of salvation.

This (for the use of it) first meets with that grosse opinion of our adversaries, the Papists, touching implicite faith, faith unfolded in the faith of the Church. The Iesuites teach, that Lay people are not bound to know what matters of faith be: ignorance (say they) is better, it sufficeth if they consent to the faith of the Church whatsoever it be, which is a grosse absurde heresie: If a Christian must know how to answer, and must be ready to yeeld an account of his faith, certainly then he must know the doctrine of faith, and of Christian hope: it cannot otherwise be.

For the use of this point to our selves; is it so that a Christian must know how to speake of Christian faith, and bee able to give a good answer to one that demands a reason of his hope? Oh then let most take notice of it, that they are far short of that knowledge that ought to be in them: be there not many, and those not of the yonger sort, but of great yeeres, that are not able to give any good account of their faith? If they be examined touching originall sinne, justification in the sight of God, and the like points, whereof they have often heard: yet they are not able to give a good and direct answer; and let it shame us, of this (indeed) we ought to be ashamed: hast thou lived many yeeres under the teaching of the word? Dost thou heare the Doctrine of faith, and heavenly knowledge from day to day, and is it not a shamefull thing that thou shouldest bee unable to render a reason, and give a good account of thy faith? Thinke on it, and let it shame thee indeed, and never rest, till thou know how to answer any that shall aske thee a reason of thine hope.

Now here a question may be moved; It may be demanded, whether a Christian be bound to answer every one that shall aske him any thing of his Christian profession.

Note.

Doct. 4.

A Christian must know how to speake when he is demanded any thing that pertains to his Christian faith and profession.

Vse 1.

Confutation of popish implicite faith.

Vse 2.

Reproofe of such are not able to give any good account of their faith.

Answ.

No, indeed a Christian is bound to make a just apology of his faith, and ought to defend the truth, and every title and jot of it, when Gods glory is endangered, and when he is called, though before unbelievers; but if any propound the question with a purpose to deride the truth, hee is not to bee answered, wee have the example of our Saviour not to answer such a question, Mat. 26.63. chap. 27. 14. and wee have his commandement, Mat. 10. 17. beware of men, and therefore we are not to answer such as aske us some thing of our Christian profession, with a manifest purpose to scorne the truth.

From these words (*that ye may know how to answer every man.*) We are further taught, that our speech must be fitly applied, it must be as an answer to a question, it must bee to the present purpose: there ought to bee in Christians an holy discretion, and they must not onely know what to speak, but also how to speak fitly, they must not onely be able to enforme the ignorant, to rebuke the unruly, to strengthen the weake, to comfort and encourage the feeble, and fearefull, and such like, but they must doe these things, so, as they may doe most good. To that end, they must have regard of all due circumstances, they must make their speech fit to the circumstances of times, persons, and places, Proverb. 29. 11. *A foole (saith Salomon) poureth out all his minde: but a wise man keepeth it in, till after ward.* A wise man observes due circumstances of time, place, and persons, Prov. 15. 23. *How good is a word in due season.* Some privat Christians being able to give good counsell, or to admonish and reprove others, yet many times faile in fitting their speech to circumstances, they tell a man of his fault being drunk, or in the heat of his passion, or they admonish and reprove such as are not fit to be admonished or reprov'd.

Who are they that are not fit to be reprov'd?

They bee of two sorts.

First, naturall fooles, Pro. 26. 4. *Answer not a foole according to his foolishnesse, lest thou be also like him.*

Verse 5. It is said, *Answer a foole, according to his foolishnesse, lest he bee wise in his owne conceit.*

There bee two sorts of fooles, naturall fooles, and conceited fooles: naturall fooles are not to be answered according to their folly, but conceited fooles are to be answered, their error is to bee confuted, and their misdemeanour to bee reprov'd, that perceiving their dotage and sin, they may be humbled, and so are these two verses to be reconciled.

Secondly, such as be obstinate scorner, Prov. 9. 8. *Rebuke not a scorner lest hee hate thee.* And our Saviours rule is Matth. 7. 6. *Give yee not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast yee your pearles before swine.* If thou (being a private Christian) be certaine that thy admonition, or reproofe will doo no good, but that the parties reprov'd will trample them under their feet as things of naught: thou art not to admonish, or reprove them, but rather bee silent, or separate from them; for if thou goe beyond thy boundes against the rule of Christ, where is thy warrant of safety against the malice of wicked and violent persons? Surely it comes to passe sometimes, that a privat Christian admonishing, or reprovving wicked persons for their finnes, not observing due circumstances, doth expose himselfe to their malice, and they runne on him, and as madde dogges rent him, and teare him; yea and sometimes put him out of patience, and due moderation; therefore in thy admonition, in thy reproofe, and in all thy gracious speeches have regard to all due circumstances, and let thy speech bee fitly applied in respect of persons, places and times, Pro. 25. 11. *A word spoken in his place is like apples of gold with pictures of silver,* holy and gracious speech is commendable in it selfe but when it is uttered in due time, and place, it is exceeding gracious and pleasant: it is pleasing to God, and it becomes profitable to others, and comfortable to thine owne soule and conscience.

Vers. 7.

Dott. 5.

Christians must not onely know what to speake, but also how to speake fitly to the present purpose, & so as they may do most good. To that end all due circumstances must be considered.

Vse. 1.

Reproofe of them who observe not due circumstances in admonishing or reprovving of others.

Quest.

Answer.

I

Object.

Answ.

Verf. 7. *Tychicus our beloved brother, and faithfull Minister, and fellow servant in the Lord, shall declare unto you my whole estate.*

8. *Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your state, and might comfort your hearts.*

9. *With Onesimus a faithfull and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall shew you of all things here.*

The Apostle having finished the first generall part of this Chapter (namely) his exhortation to some generall duties.

In this seventh verse he enters on the second generall part of it, containing the conclusion of his whole Epistle: the particular parts and branches of his conclusion we have heretofore laid forth.

The first is laid downe in the 7, 8, & 9. verses, and is a declaration of the Apostles owne love, and care of the Colossians, expressed by sending certaine messengers unto them, to acquaint them with his estate, and generally with the state of the Church where he was, and also to understand their estate, and to comfort, and confirme their hearts; that is the summe and substance of these three verses.

In them we have more particularly these two things offered to our consideration.

First, the persons whom the Apostle sent, and employed in his message.

Secondly, the ends and causes wherefore he sent them.

The persons he sent, were *Tychicus* and *Onesimus*, and both these he describes, and commends to the Colossians, to be worthy persons, by certaine excellent qualities. As first, in the 7. verse he commends *Tychicus* both by that which was common to him with all true beleeying Christians, that hee was a brother, to which hee addes the adjunct and epithite (*beloved*) (*Tychicus our beloved brother*) and then by that which was more proper, and peculiaz to him, in respect of his calling and function, as that he was; First, a Minister. Secondly, more specially, a fellow-servant with the Apostle in the Lords business.

And to both these, he addes the adjunct (*faithfull*) and *faithfull Minister*.

Secondly, he likewise commends *Onesimus* verse 9.

First, by the title (*brother*) to which he joynes two Epithites (*faithfull, and beloved*) *With Onesimus a faithfull and beloved brother.*

And secondly, by the particular relation that was betweene *Onesimus* and the Colossians, that he was one of them.

Now the ends and causes wherefore the Apostle sends these two worthy persons to the Colossians, are two.

First, to let them understand, both his state particularly, verse 7. (*shall declare unto you my whole estate*) and the things done where he was generally, verse 9. (*They shall shew you of all things here.*)

And secondly, that by them the Apostle might be certified of the estate of the Colossians, and they be comforted by those he sent unto them, chiefly by *Tychicus* a faithfull Minister; therefore he saith, verse 8. *Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your state and comfort your hearts.*

And thus wee have the resolution of these three verses. I take them together, because they make but one context.

In further handling of them, I will first speake of the persons that were sent, and then of the ends, and causes of their sending.

And for the persons (before we come to speake of them) surely, wee may observe thus much in generall.

The Apostle sent not one messenger alone, but two together, though *Ty-*

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chicus was a worthy messenger, & fit for the dispatch of the business alone, yet with him he sent *Onesimus*, no doubt in these respects, both to make the message of more authority, the things that concerned either party being confirmed by the testimony of two witnesses, and for the mutuall comfort and aide which they might have of each other, both in their journey, and in their business there, and for these causes (no doubt) it was, that our Saviour sent out his twelve Apostles two by two, *Mark*, 6. 7. and so the 70. disciples, two and two before him, *Luk*, 10. 1. Hence we may gather the wisdom and care that ought to be used in matters and businesses of weight and importance, especially in businesses of the Church, both in regard of the business it selfe, and of the persons imployed in the same, but on that will I not stand, onely observe we generally touching the persons sent by the Apostle thus much.

That the Apostle did commend the persons whom he sent on his message, and he set them out by sundry excellent qualities, and titles of honour; he said not barely, I have sent to you one named *Tychicus*, and another whose name is *Onesimus*, but, I have sent to you *Tychicus*, a man excellently qualified, a beloved brother, and faithfull Minister, with *Onesimus* also a man worthy commendation, being a faithfull and beloved brother, who is one of you: as if the Apostle had said, I have sent unto you, men whom you may safely credit and beleve, and the report and message they bring you, is to be regarded, because I know they are good men, and dare boldly commend them to you for such as will speake the truth, and make conscience of that they deliver unto you.

This no doubt was the Apostles drift and purpose, in commending his messengers sent to the Colossians: whence we may gather thus much.

That the dignity and goodnesse of the person or persons be it one or more, that are sent on a message of weight and importance, is of great force to give entertainment to the message that is brought: when the messenger is knowne to be an honest man, and of good credit, and one fearing God, the message that he brings, is the better credited, the honesty, fidelity and good qualities of the messenger commonly makes the message more welcome and better regarded.

As *David* concluded of *Abimeaz* the sonne of *Zadoch*, *2 Sam*. 18. 27. he is a good man, therefore hee commeth with good tidings: and so many times the good opinion that men have of the honesty and goodnesse of the messenger, that brings them any tidings, it swaies much with them to beleve his report, and to give great regard to it: common experience shewes this to be true, even in civill businesses and matters of the world: and no doubt thus it is also in the heavenly message, and in bringing the glad tidings of the Gospell: If such as are the Lords messengers, imployed to bring the comfortable newes of salvation, be knowne to be men well qualified, not onely with knowledge and utterance, but with sanctified hearts and lives, Oh it strikes a great respect of that which they bring, and prevaile much for the entertainment and reverend regard of the message they deliver to Gods people: for howsoever in that holy business, men ought to looke rather to the message than the messenger that brings it, yea indeed the multitude and greatest part, rather cast their eye on the messenger, than on the message: and according as the messenger is, either good or ill, so they regard the message it selfe. We read *Mark* 6. 20. *Herod* did many things that *John Baptist* taught, not because *John* was an excellent teacher, but because he was a good man, so saith the text, *Herod* knowing that *John* was a just man and holy, he revered him, hee did many things, and heard him gladly.

Now here occasion is given to reprove some who being sent on the Lords embassage to the people, yet care not how basely, & how offensively they carry themselves in the sight of those to whom they are sent, and to exhort and stirre them

The honesty, fidelity and good qualities of the messenger, commonly makes the message more welcome and better regarded.

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as carry them-

them up that as they would see any due regard of the message they bring to Gods people, and any good fruit of it: yea, as they render the comfort of their owne soules in the great day of the Lord: so they would be carefull to shew themselves not onely able messengers, but good and godly messengers of the Lord: and that they would make it appeare, that they not onely call others to fellowship and communion with Christ, but that themselves also have true fellowship and communion with him, and that it may be truly said of them, as here of *Tychicus*, that they are beloved brethren.

Wee for our parts are to pray for this, that seeing the regard of the Lords heavenly message depends much on the quality of the person of the messengers, and is commonly greater or lesse, as the messengers that bring it are qualified, and as they are either good or bad: it would please the Lord, to make all that are sent about his holy businesse, as well godly men as good schollers, and that they may be as well sanctified in their hearts and lives, as in their doctrine sound and good; otherwise certainly woefull experience will shew it, that they shall pull downe as much with their lives, as they build up with their doctrine.

Come we now to speake of the persons severally, and first of *Tychicus* and his commendation, in these words (*Tychicus our beloved brother, and faithfull Minister, and fellow-servant in the Lord*) What *Tychicus* was by birth, in respect of the country, we finde *Act. 20. 4.* that he was borne in *Asia*, and that he went with *Paul* going thither to preach the Gospell: but for his description, here *Paul* calles him:

First (*a beloved brother*) a brother not by birth or bloud, or in respect of country (as the word brother is often used in Scripture) but in respect of religion, and profession of the same true faith of Christ: so are all true Christians, all that professe the same faith of Christ called, *Math. 23. 8. one is your Doctor, so wis, Christ, and all ye are brethren*, so in many other places of Scripture: and the Apostle addes (*beloved*) thereby signifying that he was worthy to be beloved of all true Christians, for his piety, religion and godly life.

Secondly, he calles him (*faithfull Minister*) that is one, who did serve Christ in the ministry and preaching of the Gospell: and in that office, he did answer that trust that was reposed in him.

Hee addes (*and fellow-servant in the Lord*) That is, one that serves the same Lord that I doe, even the Lord Iesus Christ in the holy ministry, and labourereth in the ministry of the word, together with me. This then is the meaning of the Apostle, as if he had said: *Tychicus* who is one professing the same true faith with us, one no (doubt) beloved of God, and one whom I love, and worthy to bee beloved of all true Christians, and one that doth faithfully serve Christ, in the ministry and preaching of the Gospell, yea, and labours together with me in the ministry of the Word: hee shall declare unto you my whole state.

Note we here, in the first place, that the Apostle commending *Tychicus*, hee gives him these titles, as titles of honour & dignity, that he was a beloved brother, and faithfull minister, and fellow-servant in the Lord: he thought he could not better grace him, and set him out, than by these titles, a brother in Christ, a Minister of the Gospell, a fellow-servant in the Lord.

Hence then it is cleare, that these are indeed stiles and titles of great honour, and it is an excellent priviledge and preferment to be a brother in Christ, a Minister of the Gospell, and to be specially employed in that service.

It is said, *Ioh. 1. 12. As many as received him, to them he gave power* (or rather as the word signifies, *priviledge*) *to be the sonnes of God, even to them that beleve in his name.* Where the Evangelist teacheth, that as many as receive Christ, as many as truly beleve in Christ, & are true beleeving members of

Selves basely and offensively in the sight of those to whom they are sent.

Vse 2.

We are to pray that all that are sent about the Lords holy businesse may be as well godly men as good schollers.

Interpretation,

Doct. 2.

It is a great honour, to be a brother in Christ, a Minister of the Gospell, and to be specially employed in that service.

of Christ, and so brethren one to another in Christ, they have this priviledge and preferment, to be the sonnes of God, the excellency of which honour is unspeakable: and if to this be added, some speciall and proper title, as to be a Minister of the Gospell, it must needs bee an exceeding great honour.

I might shew it in particular, that to have the title of a faithfull Minister, is a matter of speciall honour and preferment: and therefore it is an audacious and monstrous impiety, that is found in some scoffing and prophane wretches, who dare turne that which the Lord hath given as an honour and glory to his servants, into matter of scorne and contempt: to say in way of scoffing, oh hee is a brother (forsooth) or hee is one of the brotherhood, and what is he but a pild Priest, or a pelting Minister, and such like. Such sonnes of Belial, and such prophane scoffers there be in the world.

Well, let it not discourage any that is (indeed) of the brotherhood with the members of Jesus Christ: that is a title of honour and glory, that the God of glory hath vouchsafed to set on his dearest children: and this is our rejoycing, (even as many of us as are true beleivers) that the Lord hath vouchsafed to honour us not with vaine pusses of worldly honour, but with such honour as shall never be taken from us: yea, though wee have onely the common title of Gods children, the title of beloved brethren, truly given unto us, it is enough to fill our hearts with joy, and our mouth with laughter for evermore, that being a greater dignity, than to be sonnes and heires to the greatest Monarch in the world: for then wee are the sonnes and heires to the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, and heires of a Kingdome not earthly, but in the highest heavens.

Now more specially from the first of these titles (*beloved brother*) in that the Apostle calles *Tychicus, a brother*, and he adjoynes (*beloved*) a brother in Christ, a true Christian, and so beloved of God, and beloved of the Apostle himselfe, and worthy to be beloved of all Christians:

Hence wee are taught thus much; that if a man be a true beleiving Christian, and so our brother in the Lord, we are bound even in that respect much more tenderly to embrace him in our hearts, and to love him. Howsoever, Christian love must reach generally to all men, as they are men and reasonable creatures, and we must love even the wicked and unbelieving, as partakers of the same nature, as they have title to the same common redemption, and as they have in them the remainers of Gods Image: yet in more speciall manner, and with more entire and hearty affection, are we to love the Saints and children of God, who have union and conjunction with us in Christ.

For indeed the order of Christian love is this: we are first to love God simply for himselfe, and then all that beare his Image, for his sake: and among these, those that beare Gods Image, more specially: to love them that are renewed according to Gods Image in holinesse, and excell others in spirituall graces: *Psal. 16.3. My well-doing (saith David) extendeth to the Saints, and to them that excell in vertue: Galat. 6.10. Let us do good unto all men, but especially unto them which are of the household of faith:* our doing good is a fruit of our love, and it must be extended especially to the household of faith. The object of our love is all men generally: it must be set on all, as they beare Gods Image but chiefly on the members of Christ, the Saints and children of God, in whom are manifest arguments and signes of true and unfained holinesse and religion.

What then shall we say to many in the world, who are so farre from bearing speciall love to such as have Gods Image renewed in them, or any sparke of grace wrought in their hearts, and appearing in their lives, as that thereupon they hate them, and because they have brother-hood with the members of Christ, they cannot abide them, but carry themselves spitefully towards them, and

Use 1

It is monstrous impiety to turne the titles of honour which God hath given to his servants into matter of scorne and contempt.

Use 2.

It is matter of comfort to be of the brotherhood with the members of Jesus Christ.

Dott. 3.

Though we are to love all men, yet more specially and more entirely are we to love the Saints & children of God who are our brethren in Christ.

The order of Christian love.

Use 1.

Many justly reproved who hate them that are renewed accor-

and set their chiefe delight and love on those who beare the image of Satan, and are brethren in evill, and mates and companions in drunkenesse, in swearing and the like: surely, I may say as the holy Ghost hath taught me, 1 Ioh. 3. 12. they are as *Caine* was, of that evill one Satan: they are yet to bee reputed both in their owne, and other mens judgements, children of the divell. *Caine* slew his brother, and why? because (as it followeth) his owne workes were evill, and his brothers good: the old serpent Satan, hath not yet cast his skinne, hee still sowes dislike among men, and for the same cause, wee finde it too common, where some are truly fearing God, and religious, they make themselves a prey, *Isai*, 59. 15. Others that are wicked, even in that respect, hate them, gnash their teeth at them, cannot abide them: but let such know, as they are like *Caine* in sinne, so it cannot bee, but if they goe on in that sinne, they shall at length bee like him in punishment: the hand and curse of God shall overtake them.

Let us learne to love men bearing Gods image, because they beare his image: a beleever, because he is a beleever, and a godly man or woman, because they are godly. And to perswade us to it, know we thus much:

That this is an infallible note of the true childe of God, 1 Ioh. 3. 14. *Wee know that wee are translated from death to life, because wee love the brethren:* and *David* makes this a speciall note of him that shall dwell in the Lords Tabernacle, *Psalme* 15. 4. that he is one in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but hee maketh much of those that feare the Lord. Would we then bee infallibly assured that wee are the children of God? every one (no doubt) would have that assurance, and every one making shew of religion, will flatter himselfe, that hee is a childe of God: but would we certainly know it? then let us love them that feare God, and beare Gods image, even because they beare his image, because they are godly and religious.

And that we deceive not our selves in this: let us love with special love every one, in whom we discern any measure of sanctifying grace, according to the measure of grace, without partialitie, and without respect of persons: for (happily) wee may love some that are renewed according to Gods image, some that are holy and religious, because they are kinde to us, and in respect of our owne profit, or some other by-respect, and yet not love others, as holy and religious as they, because they are not so kind, and so beneficiall unto us in outward things: that is, to love as the Publicans did, of whom Christ saith, *Matt.* 5. 47. that they are friendly to their friends, and that love may be in them that are yet in the corruption of nature.

If therefore thou wouldest bee sure that thine heart is moved with an holy and sanctified motion of love: then love them that are holy and religious, whatsoever they bee, yet though they have many infirmitie in them, and though they be thine enemies, yet love them so farre as they beare the image of God, even because they beare his image: love every brother because hee is a brother in Christ, and that will bee to thee an infallible note that thou art a childe of God, and it will certainly seale it up to the comfort of thy soule, that thou art in the state of grace in this life, and shalt be partaker of the glorie of Gods children in the life to come.

In the next place wee are to observe that the Apostle commending *Tychicus* in regard of his calling and function, that hee was a Minister, and one that did serve Christ in the ministerie of the Gospell, and one that laboured together with him in that calling, he gives to these titles the adjunct or epithete, *faithfull*, (and *faithfull Minister*) we see hee doth not commend *Tychicus* a Minister for his wit, his learning, his eloquence, his gravitie, &c. that he was a learned, an eloquent, or grave Minister, (though these bee good and commendable things in a Minister) but he commends him for his faithfulness, that he was faithfull in his ministry, & did answer that trust that was reposed in him in discharge of his duty

ding to Gods image, and spitefully abuse them, and love and delight in them who beare the image of Satan

Vse 2

We are to love them that beare Gods image because they beare it. and a godly man or woman because they are godly. This is a speciall note that wee are Gods children. How we may bee sure that our hearts are moved with a sanctified motion of love.

Hence

Doct. 2.

The chiefe ornament of a Minister of Christ is faithfulness in the execution of his office.

Hence then wee may gather, that the chiefe ornament and that which most commends a Minister of Christ in regard of the execution of his office, is to be faithfull: it is the best epithite of praise that can bee given to a Minister of the Gospell, that he is faithfull, and that he is one that doth use the talent and gift bestowed on him for the best advantage of gaining glory to Christ his Lord, and is good to his people, and that in the performance of such duties as concerne him, he doth answer that trust that is reposed in him.

1. Cor. 4. 2. *As for the rest, it is required of the disposers, that every man be found faithfull:* as if he had said: As for the other things, or howsoever he be carefull for other things, it is not so much materiall, but it is especially required of a Minister of the Gospell, that he be faithfull: and (indeed) faithfulness is required of a Minister in every ministeriall action, that in teaching, in exhorting, in comforting, in reprehending, and such like, he be found faithfull: and without faithfulness he can doe no duty of his calling, pleasing to God, or profitable to men. I have heretofore handled this point, chap. 1. 7. and therefore I now touch it in a word.

Now in the last place from this commendation of *Tychicus*, note we, that the Apostle, though he was an Apostle, and *Tychicus* (no doubt) but an ordinary Minister, yet he calles him fellow-servant (*Tychicus our beloved brother, and faithfull Minister, and fellow-servant.*)

We see then, that even ordinary Ministers of the Gospell, such as are truly called to that office and function, are fellow-servants with the Apostles of Christ, though indeed, there is a difference in degree betweene an ordinary Minister, and an Apostle (an Apostle being a Minister of a higher sort) and that by the ordinance of God, yet ordinary Ministers serve the same Lord that the Apostles did, even the Lord Iesus Christ.

And that is a matter of great comfort to all true Ministers of the Gospell, faithfully labouring in their calling: they are thereby assured of the assistance of Gods Spirit in teaching, of his protection over them in their Ministry, and that they shall be rewarded in the end, with an eternall waight of glory, as certainly as the Apostles that are in heaven: they serve the same most powerfull, good, and gracious Lord, the Apostles did, and serving him, they cannot be disappointed of their hope.

Come we now to the description of *Onesimus*.

Verf. 9. *With Onesimus a faithfull and beloved brother, who is one of you.*

Interpretation.

THis *Onesimus* (no doubt) was the same man that was servant to *Philemon*, who both robbed his master, and ran away from him: whom *Paul* (after that) having won to Christ, and begotten in his bowels, as he saith, *Philem. epist. verf. 10.* he sent againe to his master, craving pardon for him. Now him, the Apostle calles not onely (*beloved brother*) but he addes (*faithfull*) thereby meaning, that he was an honest, and trusty brother: and hee thus commends *Onesimus*, least upon his former default, and fraud, the *Colossians* should take occasion to set light by him: and the Apostle further commends him, that he was one of them (that is) one of the same Countrey, and (it may bee) of the same City with the *Colossians*, and a member of their Church.

Now for the matter of doctrine offered unto us from this commendation of *Onesimus*, (passing by that which was common to him with *Tychicus*, as that he was a beloved brother) wee are to marke here that the Apostle calles him a faithfull brother: thereby shewing that howsoever he had beene in former time faulty, in deceiving of his master: yet now being converted, and having repented of that sinne, the Apostle did not so much as thinke of his former fault, but now esteemed him as an honest, and trusty brother, and so calles him, and would

Doct. 3.

Ordinary Ministers that are truly called to that office, are fellow servants with the Apostles.

Vse.

Comfort to all true Ministers of the Gospell, who faithfully labour in their calling.

would have others so to thinke of him. Hence wee are plainly taught thus much.

That the falles and faults of men (after their true repentance and conversion to the Lord) are to be forgotten of us, no mans sinne which he hath truly repented of, ought to bee any disparagement to him in after time: wee are not to have any man in lesse esteeme, or to thinke the worse of him for his sinne in former time committed, if he have truly repented of his sinne, and good fruits of amendment doe bud forth, and shew themselves in his life and conversation: but we are rather (after the example of the Apostle in this place) to commend him, as farre as truth will beare, and to speake of the graces of God, that are in him.

Luke 7. We finde, that when a certaine woman that had beene a notorious sinner came to Christ, sitting in the Pharises house, though she washed his feete with teares, and shewed forth tokens of unfained repentance, and love, yet the Pharise that had bidden Christ, still esteemed of the woman as she had beene in times past, and said within himselfe, verf. 39. Surely, this man is not a Prophet, if he were, hee would have knowne who, and what manner of woman this is which touched him, for she is a sinner: this secret thought and close biting censure of the Pharise, our Saviour (who knew his heart) brought to light, and he reproveth it.

First, by propounding to him a parable, from the 40. verse to the 47. and in the 47. verse, he doth directly checke his hard conceit of the woman, and tells him, that he thought amisse of her: *I say to thee, many sins are forgiven her, for she loved much.* As if he had said: thou iudget amisse of this woman, thou art not to deeme of her according to her former life past, knowne to thee to bee wicked and sinfull, but as she now is, truly penitent: judge of her by her love which is an infallible prooffe of her acquittance, and discharge from her sinnes: plainly teaching the point I have now propounded, that we are not to thinke, or esteeme the worse of any one, that hath beene knowne in former times to be faulty, if so bee now we see visible and apparent signes of his unfained repentance, but we are to thinke and speake of him as now he is.

And the reasons of this are these.

First, in regard of God, that he may be glorified in the conversion of sinners: for the worse they have beene before, the greater is Gods mercy and power in their amendment, and his mercy towards them therein ought the more to be acknowledged, and he the more magnified for the same accordingly.

Secondly, in respect of the person himselfe that hath repented, that he may be encouraged, and fully perswaded of the good estimation he is in with men: for howsoever his conscience, after his true repentance, doe assure him of Gods favour towards him, yet his weakenesse will easily make him suspect, that he is contemned of men, or that howsoever they make shew of esteeming him, yet some hard conceit still sticks in their minde against him.

And lastly, in regard of other men, to whom his labours and endeavours, though never so well performed, shall be of little force or fruit, except there be a good opinion conceived of him: for these reasons we are not to thinke, or speake the worse of any that hath beene heretofore knowne to be guilty of some great sinne, if now he have repented, and doe shew evident signes of sound repentance.

First, therefore such persons are justly to be taxed, and much to be blamed, who if once they know another to be guilty of some great sinne, ever after that, carry a soule suspicion of that party, and though they see manifest tokens of repentance, yet will never be satisfied, but are alwayes suspicious, and take it as a maxime or ground, he or she, that is once found to be evill, is alwaies supposed to be evill: yea, some are so rash and so unadvised, that they are ready on every jarre,

Doct. 1.

The falles and faults of men after their true repentance and turning to the Lord, are to be forgotten of us.

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Vse 2.

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jarre, and difference, to cast that in the teeth of another, which haply the Lord hath cast behinde his backe, and forgiven, the party having truly repented.

This ought not so to be, thou art not to thinke, or speake the worse of any, whose sinne hath been open to the sight of the world, if now he hath repented of his sinne, and now carry in his body and life, the markes of true repentance: consider with thy selfe, that thou wouldest be: loath to have throwne in thy dish, thou hast done amisse in former times, if thou hast beene truly humbled for it: remember then to deale with others, as thou wouldest bee dealt withall thy selfe: and for this point I say no more but this, take heed thou condemne not him, whom (it may be) God hath acquitted: set not thou a curse where thou seest the print of Gods blessing, and doe not thou load them with heavy burthenis, whom (for any thing thou knowest) Christ himselfe hath dishonoured: if thou so doe, thou makest thy selfe odious in the sight of God. *Pro. 17. 15. He that iustificth the wicked, and he that condemneth the iust, and whom God hath iustified, even they both are an abomination to the Lord.*

Againe, is it so, that the falles and faults of men after their true repentance are to be forgiven by others, and are not to bee cast in their teeth, and they are not to be upbraided with them? Here is then matter of great comfort to all such as have beene heretofore overtaken with foule sinnes, but now are truly humbled for the same, and doe testifie their repentance by bringing forth new fruits: men are not to object those sinnes to them, if they doe, it is either malice, or rashnesse in them, it is their sinne: yea further, if thou hast beene faulty in some foule sinne in times past, and hast truly repented of thy sin, know it to thy comfort, the devill himselfe is not to upbraid thee with it, hee cannot lay it to thy charge: if hee doe at any time object to thee thy life past, on this ground thou mayst repell his objection, and mayst boldly say unto him, Tell mee not what I have beene, but tell me what I am, and what I will be (by Gods grace) hereafter: I (confesse indeed) to the glory of Gods power, and mercy, I have beene thus or thus faulty, but now (as the Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 6. 11.*) I am washed, now I am sanctified, I am iustified in the name of the Lord Iesus, and by the spirit of my God, and the Lord now accepts me not as I have beene, but as I am: and therefore avoyd Satan, be packings; thou art not to object to me my former sinne. Thus may every one that hath truly repented his former grosse sinne, answer the devill, objecting to him his life past. And this is a singular comfort to all true repentant sinners; and let none but such take hold of this comfort: let not such as live in their sinnes, catch at this, it belongs not unto them; but if thou hast been a grievous sinner heretofore, and now art humbled truly for thy sinnes, and truly repentant, here is comfort for thee, I speake it for thy comfort alone, neither men nor devils are to object to thee thy former sinnes; if they doe, it is nothing, the Lord doth iustifie thee, and who shall condemne thee? and thinke on it to thy comfort.

One thing yet remaines in the commendation of *Onesimus*: the Apostle adds (*who is one of you*) as if he had said: *Onesimus* is one of your owne city, and a member of your Church, therefore you ought the more to esteeme him.

Hence wee are taught, that even naturall and civill respect in which men partake one with another, as consanguinity, affinity, nation, country with the like, should be to them causes of greater mutuall love one towards another: if men be conioyned not onely in fellowship of the same faith and religion, but also by some naturall or civill bond, they are in that respect bound more tenderly to love and regard one another.

And on this ground (no doubt) it was that the Apostle said, *Titus 2. 14.* If any provide not for his owne, namely, for them of his household, hee denieth the faith and is worse than an Infidell. A man is especially to love, and regard those that are more neerely knit to him, by the bond of nature, or by any other spe-
ciall

ciall bond whatsoever, It is our common fault that wee esteeme them least that are of our selves, in regard of the familiaritie wee have with them, or because their infirmities are best knowne unto us: and it is hard to finde neighbours to agree together, even because they are neighbours, and daily converse one with another: what jarres and differences doe daily rise between neighbour and neighbour, and betweene such as dwell the next doore one to another: wee find it too common a thing. Well, let us remember, that our neighbourhood ought to binde us more neerely together in spirituall love one to another, and when thou art stirred up by the divell and thine owne corruption, to jarre, and to fall out with thy neighbours, thinke thus with thy selfe: Shall I fall out with him? no: besides the common bond of Christianitie, I am bound to him with a more speciall bond of neighbourhood: hee is of the same parish, and of the same particular congregation with me, and therefore I ought the more to love and regard him, even in that respect: let us remember that wee are taught by the same word, fed at the same table of the Lord, led along by the same waters of comfort, and we rest in the same fold: and let us in regard of that sweet conjunction, more tenderly love and regard one another, that so having mutuall love and fellowship one with another in this life, we may (through Gods mercie) have eternall fellowship, and Communion together in the life to come.

Having now spoken of the persons of whom the Apostle sent to the Colossians, and of the commendations he gave them, come we to speake of the ends, and causes, wherefore he sent them, which are (as I have shewed) two.

First, to acquaint the Colossians with his owne state, particularly, and with the state of things where he was, generally: as he saith verse 7. (*shall declare unto you my whole state*) And verse 9. (*They shall shew you of all things here.*)

Secondly, that he might be made acquainted with their state, and that they might receive comfort by his messengers, sent unto them, and especially by *Tychicus*, whom he saith, verse 8. that he sent to them for the same purpose.

Touching the words, some things are to bee cleared, that wee may better proceede in the matter of doctrine: verse 7. (*shall declare unto you my whole state*) The Apostle by his whole state, meant all those things that were done to him, and befell him in prison: for so the words doe signifie: things done about me, or done to me: the Apostle would have the Colossians understand, what was done to him, and how hee was dealt withall being in prison: then he saith, verse 9. *they shall shew you of all things here*: by *all things*, he meant not all things in generall, whatsoever were done at Rome, for there was (no doubt) a multitude of things done, a world of things done in that cite, but all things concerning the state of the Church, and the case of Christian faith, and profession, the knowledge whereof was profitable for the Colossians to know.

And where he saith, verse 8. that he sent to them for the same purpose, that he might know their state: his meaning is, that hee might understand the state of their Church, and how it stood with them in regard of Christian profession, how the Gospell prospered, and was glorified among them, or otherwise how they were molested and troubled for the Gospell: he addes (*and might comfort your hearts*) that is, might encourage you, and cheere up your hearts, haply grieving, and fainting for my imprisonment, or persecution of the Church: that he might hearten, and strengthen you against imminent dangers, and against the scandall, and offence of the crosse.

Thus then we are to conceive the Apostles meaning, in respect of the ends wherefore he sent messengers to Colosse, as if hee had said, I have sent to you two worthy messengers *Tychicus* and *Onesimus*, to these ends and purposes, that they may report to you, how I am dealt withall, and all things that are done to mee in my imprisonment, together with all things that concerne the

Vse.

Reprooffe of them who regard those least who are of themselves.

Interpretation.

state of the Church here at Rome, and may relate, and make report to me backe againe, how it stands with you, how the Gospell doth prosper, and is glorified among you, or otherwise, how you suffer for the Gospels sake: and that they might be meanes to cheere up your hearts, that you faint not at my trouble, and might strengthen you against troubles that are like to fall upon you, and against the offence and scandall of the crosse.

I might hence (as just occasion is given) speake of the Apostles singular care that he had over the Colossians, who being himselfe in prison, which could not but give him much occasion of care for himselfe, yet ceased not to care for them, and in care of their good, not only to write, but to send such worthy messengers unto them, and that for so good ends: yea such men as himselfe (no doubt) had need of to minister to him in prison, and so for their good, to neglect (as it were) his owne life, and health, which was an exceeding measure of care, and it ought to be imitated of all that will approve themselves faithfull and carefull ministers in the like case, but upon that I will not stand.

In that the Apostle sent forth his messengers to these ends, to acquaint the Colossians with his owne state, and with the state of the Church where hee was, and to understand of their state: he doth plainly manifest a desire that was in him to know the state of the Colossians, and that they also were desirous to heare and know his state, and the state of the whole Church where he was, and that they did even long to heare one from another: whence we are given to understand thus much in generall:

That particular Churches may be desirous to know the estate one of another: one particular Church may desire to heare newes from another: yea, particular persons and members of the Church, may enquire after the estate of other Churches, yea, of speciall members, and speciall instruments of Gods glory, in other Churches.

We have here example of it, and elsewhere in other Epistles of Paul, and we have a notable example of it in *Nehemiah*: *Nehemiah* inquired after the state of the Jewes, and concerning Ierusalem, *Nehem. 1. 2.* and there is reason for this: Because (indeed) the Lords dealing with his Church, is not only a part of his revealed will, but it is a thing of speciall note and observation, and therefore may be enquired after and knowne.

And so it is lawfull for us, to desire newes from other Churches, touching such as are eminent members and speciall instruments of Gods glorie in those Churches: but withall know this, that it must not be for novelties sake: it is an Heathenish thing to hearken after newes for novelties sake, as the Athenians are noted to have done, *Act. 17. vers. 21.* who gave themselves either to tell, or to heare some newes, and many of us may justly be taxed also for so doing. We may lawfully desire to heare newes, but our listening after newes from other Churches, must be to other good ends and purposes, as namely, that wee may praise God for their good estate, or that we may reach forth our helping hands to them, either by prayer, or otherwise, as occasion and necessitie shall require. These (indeed) are the principall, and almost the onely causes why wee should be desirous to heare newes from other Churches: and if wee listen after newes to these ends, it is a testimonie of our communion with them, and that wee are members of the same body with them, and have a fellow-feeling, both of their good, and of their troubles.

Now more specially, in that the Apostle saith, *vers. 7.* that *Tychicus* should declare to the Colossians his whole state, how hee was dealt withall, and all things that befell him in his imprisonment (this being one end wherefore hee sent his messengers) and he sending those messengers, out of his singular love, and care that hee had of the good of the Colossians, wee must needs conceive thus much:

Doct. 3.
Particular Churches may desire to know the estate one of another: & particular persons may enquire after the estate of other Churches.

Reason.

Vse.

It is lawfull to desire to heare newes from other Churches, and touching such as be speciall instruments of Gods glory in them, if it be not for novelties sake.

The principall causes why we should desire to heare newes from other Churches.

That

That it was good for the Colossians to know the state of the Apostle then in prison, and hence wee may gather this point of instruction;

That it is good for us ever to know the state of Gods children, that are imprisoned, or that lye under any other pressure, or trouble whatsoever: it is good for us to bee acquainted with the state of Gods children suffering either imprisonment, or any other kinde of trouble or affliction: it is good for us to know, and consider how they are dealt withall, what things come unto them, how they behave and carry themselves in their troubles, and what issue they have out of them, what end the Lord makes, as *James* saith *Iam. 5. 11.* Ye have heard of the patience of *Iob*, and have knowne what end the Lord made: so it is good for us to know, yea to marke, and observe the things that befall Gods children in their sufferings, and what end the Lord makes of them; and not onely to know and consider the things that befall the Church and the children of God in former ages, set before us in Scripture for examples to looke upon; but to know and consider the things that are now done to Gods children in time of their troubles, and how they demean themselves, and what issue they have out of them: for therein wee shall many times see Gods great mercy and his wonderfull power manifestly appearing, and therein we shall see the malice and fury of Satan, and of the world against Gods children, and how marvellous the Lord is in his Saints, how hee many times restraines the malice and power of their enemies, how hee supports and holds up his children, how hee armes them with patience, and how hee is present by the unspeakable comfort of his spirit, when they are most weake, and gives them issue out of their troubles when all hope seemes to bee gone: and therefore doubtlesse it is good for us to know and consider the state of Gods children in time of their imprisonment or any other suffering whatsoever, it is good for us to marke and observe it, and to bee acquainted with it.

To what purpose may some say? Even to this purpose, both to teach us how to carry our selves, *Psal. 31. 6.* and to arme and strengthen us, and to make us better able to endure the like triall: yea, the knowledge and due consideration of the state of Gods children in time of their pressures and afflictions, and how they are dealt withall, how they carry themselves, what comfort they finde, and what end the Lord makes of their trials, is of excellent use, to put off, and to make void a notorious shift that Satan useth sometimes against the weake Christian: as when a weake Christian is pressed with some great affliction, and some (to comfort him, and cheere him up) haply put him in minde of *Ioseph*, of *David*, of *Iob*, and such like, and wish him to consider what end the Lord made of their trials, Satan is ready to suggest to the weake Christian: alas, what tell you me of *Ioseph*, *David* or *Iob*? what am I to be compared to them? they were men of excellent gifts, and endued with a great measure of strength, their example is not to be used and applied to me: which indeed is false, for as *James* saith of *Elias*, *Iam. 5. 17.* they were subject to like passions that we are, they had their infirmities as other men have, and they are set forth as examples of comfort, to the weakest of Gods children: but if a weake Christian through the subtilty of Satan, and his owne weaknesse, bee not able to finde comfort in consideration of these examples, yet if hee can call to minde, that hee knew in his owne time a childe of God, as weake as himselfe, lying under some great affliction, and hee was acquainted with his whole state in his affliction, and how the Lord vouchsafed comfort unto him, and made good end of his trouble, he shall finde that that will bee of excellent use to repell and quench the fiery darts of Satan, and that will bee a notable meanes to strengthen and to hold him up, and to give him assurance, that the Lord will likewise restraine the malice of Satan against him, and give him patience in his affliction, and will make

Doct. 4.

It is good for us to be acquainted with the state of Gods children that be in prison, or in any other trouble or affliction,

Quest.

Answ.

V. 1.

The great good that comes unto us by our knowledge and due consideration of the state of Gods children in time of their troubles.

such an end of it, as shall be most for his owne glory, and his comfort: doe thou therefore acquaint thy selfe with the state of Gods children, suffering either imprisonment or any other trouble, (thou canst not want examples) consider, observe, and mark them how they are dealt withall, how they behave themselves, what end the Lord makes of their trouble, and thou shalt finde it will be a notable meanes to strengthen thee in time of like tryall: and if thou in time of thy affliction canst call to mind, and bee able to say, I know a child of God, that was afflicted as I am, I remember his whole state, how he was dealt withall, and what end the Lord made of his trouble, no doubt, thou shalt finde, that this conclusion of comfort will follow: therefore I make no question, but that the Lord will be likewise good unto mee, and give mee such issue out of my trouble, as shall be most for his owne glory, and my good. Let every childe of God therefore, labour not only to arme himselfe with comforts and examples of Scripture, (though with those chiefly) but with examples also of his owne age and time, and thou shalt finde, that in time of need, thou shalt thereby have stronger consolation and comfort.

Now further, whereas the Apostle saith, hee sent his messengers to the Colossians, to know their state, and to shew them all things where hee was, meaning this, to know the state of their Church, how it stood with them in respect of Christian profession, and things that did concerne the state of religion where he was: we may easily conceive thus much:

That in our listning and enquiring after the state of other Churches, we are chiefly to enquire how it stands with them in respect of religion, how it fares with the Gospell among them, and how the professors of it are dealt withall: yea, in our enquiring after the state of our particular friends absent from us, we are chiefly to listen and looke after their spirituall state.

It is an usuall thing for men (in token of their love) to enquire after the health, the wealth, the frugalitie of their friends absent, and farre from them, which (indeed) is not to be disallowed, it is both lawfull and commendable: the Philippians enquired after the health of *Epaphroditus*, chap. 2. 28. after hee had been sicke, and now recovered, the Apostle sent him to them that they might see him, and rejoyce for his recoverie: but we are especialle to listen after them and desire to know how it stands with them in respect of religion, how they profit and increase in faith, in love, in repentance, in humilitie, and in other gifts and graces of Gods spirit: that is the thing we are chiefly to enquire after: and let it suffice to have named this point. The Apostle addes further, that hee sent *Tychicus* to the Colossians, that he might comfort them, that he might bee a meanes to cheere up their hearts, that they should not faint at his troubles.

Whence we are taught, that it is a principall durie to be performed by them that are sent, as *Tychicus* was to others, to comfort them to whom they are sent that they faint not, and that they bee not overcome of affliction: yea it is one speciall end to bee driven at, by all such as are sent forth from the Lord to his people, even by all the Ministers of the Gospell: they are in their speeches and ministeriall actions, chiefly to ayme at this, that mens hearts may bee comforted, that such as belong to God may receive spirituall joy and comfort, and may be furnished with such comfort, as that they may be able to stand without fainting in time of any affliction, that is either upon themselves or others.

For (indeed) for that end have they knowledge of the secrets of the Gospell given them, and the word of the Gospell put into their mouthes, which is the word of glad tidings and heavenly comfort: and the end of the preaching of it, is to bring Gods elect to certaine hope of salvation: and as many as are begotten by that lively hope, are also brought to rejoyce with joy unspeakable and glorious, 1 Pet. 1. 8. This point I have handled before, therefore I now only touch it.

¶ R. C.

¶ We are chiefly to inquire how it stands with other Churches, and with our friends absent in respect of religion.

Doct. 5.

We are chiefly to inquire how it stands with other Churches, and with our friends absent in respect of religion.

Vse.

Reproofs of them that chiefly enquire after other things.

Doct. 6.

The Ministers of the Gospell are chiefly to intend in their speeches and ministeriall actions, the spirituall ioy and comfort of such as belong to God.

It may serve to checke and reprove many Ministers of the Gospell, who in their speeches and other ministeriall actions, ayme not at the comfort and edification of those, to whom they are sent, but at their owne profit: but chiefly it discovers the wickednesse of Popish teachers, who turne their speeches and their teaching to a cleane contrary end, even to hold men in continuall feare and doubt, and so in stead of comfort they fill them full of discomfort, and dispaire in time of great affliction: any man may see that that is to crosse the ordinance of God, and to profane the holy word of comfort.

We are futher to marke, that the Apostle saith not, and might comfort you, but, comfort your hearts.

Hence we are taught: That comfort of heart, true and sound comfort, that comforteth the hearts of men, is ordinarily delivered by the ministers of the Gospell out of the word of God, I say (ordinarily) for extraordinarily it may be delivered by private persons. Iob 33. 19. we find that when a man is stricken with sorrow on his bed, and finds no comfort, yet if there be with him a faithful messenger of the Lord, one of a thousand, if hee declare unto him his righteousness, and minister comfort to him faithfully, out of the word of God, that will comfort him, and cheere him up, & make him see the face of the Lord with joy, ver. 26. and the reason and ground of this is;

Because (indeed) the Lord that formed the lips hath undertaken to give a blessing to the word of comfort delivered by his faithful Ministers, Iſai. 57. 19. *I create the fruits of the lips to be peace.* Peace unto them that are farre off, and to them that are neere saith the Lord. Peace (that is) true, perpetuall, and constant comfort, unto them that are farre off, and to them that are neere.

Oh then, what account ought wee to make of the comforts of the word, made knowne to us by the ministry of faithful Ministers? How ought wee to treasure, and store them up in our hearts? Worldly wisdom teacheth men to provide against a storme, and a rainy day (as we use to speake) that they may have some thing to comfort their bodies in time of need; oh then be thou wise, provide some comfort for thy soule against the time of distresse, and affliction, and remember that thou canst not ordinarily have true comfort, unlesse it bee delivered by the ministry of the Gospell out of the word of God, and the comforts that faithful Ministers deliver out of the word, are cordiall indeed, they are such as will stand by thee, and cheere up thine heart; when all the comforts in the world faile thee: thou maist observe it in that sometimes it comes to passe, that a man that hath had no care to provide such comfort; when the Lord lets loose the cord of his conscience, and (haply) now hee lyeth on his death bed, though he would give all the world (if it were his) for the least dram of sound comfort, yet hee cannot have it, therefore bee thou wise now, make precious account of the comforts delivered to thee in the ministry of the word, hide them and treasure them up in thine heart, that in time of need they may comfort thee, and thou maist find the sweetnesse and comfort of them in thy greatest affliction.

Verſ. 10. *Aristarcus my prison-fellow salutesh you, and Marcus Barnabas sisters sonne, (touching whom ye received commandement; If he come into you, receive him.)*

11. *And Iesus which is called Justus, which are of the circumcision. These only are my work-fellowes unto the kingdome of God, which have bene unto my consolation.*

In this verse the Apostle comes to a second branch of his conclusion (namely) the declaration of the love of others that were with him towards the Colossians, made knowne both by their salutations, sent unto them, and by their pray-

Vſe.

Many ministers of the Gospell justly reprov'd, but especially the wickednes of popish teachers discovered.

Doct. 7.

True & sound comfort of heart is ordinarily delivered by the ministers of the Gospell out of the word of God.

Reason.

Vſe.

Speciall account to bee made of the comforts of the word, delivered by the ministry of faithful ministers.

The second branch of the Apostles conclusion.

ers for them, in the 10. 11. 12. 13. and 14. verses. In the 10. and 11. verses. wee have three persons mentioned, that out of their love, sent salutations to the Colossians, *Aristarcus*, *Marcus*, and *Iesus*; and (that the Apostle might incite and stirre up the Colossians, to regard the love of these men, and to love them again) he describes them, and sets them out after a double manner.

First, he commends them by such titles as were proper to them severally, as that *Aristarcus* was his prison-fellow, *Marcus* kinsman to *Barnabas*, his sisters sonne, and that he was also a man touching whom they had received commandements, that if he came unto them, they should receive him: and *Iesus*, by his surname, that he was surnamed *Iustus*.

Then the Apostle commends them all three together, by things common to them all.

As first, by their descent from the Jewes, that they were all three of the race of the Jewes, (which are of the circumcision.)

Secondly, by their assisting of him, and working together with him to the kingdome of God, which commendation is further amplified by the word of restraint (*only*) that they only were his worke-fellowes unto the kingdome of God.

Thirdly, they are commended by the comfort which they yielded to the Apostle, that being in part an effect of their assistance of him to the kingdome of God, in the last words of vers. 11. (*which have been unto my consolation*) and so we see the generall things contained in these two verses.

Come we to speake of them severally, and first of the 10. vers. (*Aristarcus*) my prison-fellow salutesh you, and *Marcus*, *Barnabas* sisters sonne.) Touching these two persons, who they were: the first of them we may read of, *Act. 19. 29. Act. 20. 4. and Act. 27. 2.* In those places wee find that he was of *Macedonia*, a *Thessalonian*, no doubt, descended of the Jewes, and being converted by *Pauls* preaching, he did accompany him in the most of his journeyes: hee was taken with him in the tumult at *Ephesus*, and after that hee accompanied him going into *Asia*, and was carried prisoner together with *Paul* to *Rome*, and therefore he here calls him his fellow-prisoner.

The other here named (*Marcus*) was (no doubt) that *Iohn Marke*, spoken of, *Act. 13. 11.* who being taken into the company of *Paul*, and *Barnabas*, ministred to them in their journey till they came to *Perga*, a cite in *Pamphilia*, but then departed from them, and returned to *Ierusalem*, *Act. 13. 13.* by meanes of whose departure, there arose afterward a sharp difference betweene *Paul* and *Barnabas*, insomuch as they parted company, and went asunder one from another, *Act. 15. 39.* But after this, *Marke* repented him of his departure, and was reconciled to *Paul*; yea, he became studious and painfull in promoting the Gospel, & he was with *Paul* being prisoner at *Rome*, & ministred unto him, as appeares both in this text, and *Philem. Epist. vers. 24.* him the Apostle commends under the title of *Barnabas* sisters sonne, (that is) nephew, or kinsman to *Barnabas*, that worthy servant of Christ: and he further adds that touching him they had received commandements, meaning that they had beene written to concerning him, and the tenour and effect of the commandement, or writing was, that if he came, they should receive him (that is) that they should entertaine him kindly, and respectfully, as a true and faithfull servant of Christ, and the reason of that Commandement, or writing was, lest upon his former fault his refusing to goe with *Paul* and *Barnabas* to the worke of the Lord, and thereupon *Pauls* refusall to take him to his company, the Colossians should thinke that *Paul* still carried an hard conceit of him, and that hee was not worthy to be received.

Thus then conceive we the meaning of the Apostle in the words of this verset as if hee had said: *Aristarcus* that hath gone through many brunts of trouble with

Interpre-
tation,

with me, and now my fellow prisoner, and *Iohn Marke* nephew to *Barnabas*, that worthy servant of Christ, who (indeed) at one time pulled away his shoulder from the worke of the Lord, for which I was much offended, and after that refused to take him to my company, but having repented himselfe of his departure, and being reconciled unto me, I have written to you concerning him, and touching him you have received commandements, that if he come to you, you should give him kind and respective entertainement. These two out of their love, send salutations, they lovingly and friendly salute you.

Now heere observe we in generall that these persons *Aristarcus*, *Marcus*, and *Iesus*, called *Iustus*, out of their love, and in token of it, sent salutations to the Colossians: whence we have warrant and ground for sending salutations: that sending of salutations, is not onely a matter of civility and good manners (as we call them) but a duty of love required of Christians, and to be performed one to another, by word, or by writing. We have example of it not onely here but in other places also, *Rom. 16.* almost throughout the whole chapter, *1. Cor. 16. 19. 20.* *2. Cor. 13. 12.* we find it required by expresse precept: greet ye one another with an holy kisse, and therefore sending of greeting one to another, is not onely a matter of common courtesie, but a duty to be performed for conscience sake, to expresse that love and good affection that we beare one to another: for the Lord who hath appointed it to be a token of love, would have it to proceed from love, and therefore whom we are forbidden to love in their evill waies, we are forbidden to salute, *1. Ioh. 10.* *If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not to house, neither bid him God-speed.* We must then looke with what affection we salute one another: our saluting and greeting one another must be testimony and token of our hearty, and unfained love to those which we salute.

No doubt we will easily yeeld that to salute one another is our duty, and we so doe, as occasion is offered, but is thy saluting of another at all times a fruit of thy true love to them whom thou salutest? I feare me it is not so in some, they salute others, and seeme kindly and friendly to greet them, but their salutation is many times (as we use to say) but from the teeth outward, it comes not from any true love of the heart, especially if there have beene a difference, or jarre between them and those whom they salute, or they have conceived some dislike of them, then their salutation is but as the covetous misers welcome, *Pro. 23. 7.* as though he thought it in his heart, he saith to his guest eate and drinke, but his heart is not with him: so they salute others with whom they live, and (happily) aske them how they doe, but it is like *Joabs* saluting of *Amasa*, *2. Sam. 20. 9.* they carry within, a wicked purpose, and mischievous heart against them, yea some thinke it sufficient if they yeeld a verball greeting of those with whom they live, and stickenot to say, I give him or her the time of the day, when I meete them, I aske them how they doe, and what would you have more? yes, there is more required of thee: thy saluting of others must proceede from a true love of them, it must be a fruit issuing out of that love, and to that end consider thus much:

That counterfeit love to men discovers fained and counterfeit love to God. For the first Table of the commandements is fulfilled in the second: and the duties of the second, are plaine evidences of the duties of the first: and hee that saith hee loves God, and hates his brother, he is a liar: for how can hee that loveth not his brother whom he hath scene, love God whom hee hath not scene, *1. Ioh. 4. 20.*

Againe, counterfeit love to men discovers a corrupt heart, an heart not sanctified by the word, and spirit of God, *1. Pet. 1. 22.* seeing your soules are purified in obeying the truth through the Spirit, to love brotherly without fainting, love one another with a pure heart fervently.

Doff. 1.

Sending of salutations is not onely a matter of civility, but a duty of love that one christian is to yeeld to another, and it must proceede from love.

Use. 1.

Reproofe of those who yeeld to others only a verball and complementall salutation.

1.

Motives to stir us up to salute others heartily

If then thou wouldest be loath to dissemble with God, and if thou wouldest not discover that thou art yet in the dregs of nature, and not sanctified by the word and spirit of God, then let thy heart and tongue ever goe together in thy saluting of others, take heed of formall saluting of any: let thy saluting and greeting of others ever proceed from inward affection, and bee an evidence and testimony of thy unfained love to those whom thou salutest.

In the next place wee are more specially to marke, that the Apostle (to provoke the Colossians to love, and honour *Aristarcus*, as hee out of his love saluted them) describes him by his imprisonment with himselfe, that hee had gone thorow many troubles, and now was his prison-fellow.

Doct. 2.

The constant suffering of men and their imprisonment ought to move us to love and to honour them above other professors.

Whence we may note thus much: That the constant suffering of men, and namely the imprisonment which they suffer or have suffered for the truth, should be a speciall reason to move us to love and to honour them, yea to honor them above other men, yea above other professors of the Gospel. Wee find that the Apostle thus set forth *Andronicus* and *Iunia* his Cosens, Rom. 16. 7. And *Epaphras Philem*. Epist. vers. 23. and indeed ought we not exceedingly to love, and in love to honour, and respect them, who being free, are content to become bound for the Gospels sake, and are most faithfull and fast to Gods truth? and ought wee not exceedingly to honour those whom the God of glory hath so highly honoured, as to chuse them out from among the common sort of soldiers, to bee, as it were, his champions, to stand out in the defence of his truth, against all gainesayers? certainly we ought.

Vse.

We are not to thinke as the world doth touching those that are imprisoned for the truth of God.

And therefore take heed thy thoughts bee not like the thoughts of the world, doe not thou thinke they are fooles, and silly fellows, men of no reach nor wit, that suffer restraint of their liberty by imprisonment for the truth of God, as the world, and as carnall minded men thinke of them: but remember the words of the Apostle, Phil. 1. 29. *To you it is given for Christ, that not onely ye should believe in him, but also suffer for his sake.*

The Apostle would have us to know that it is a speciall favour which none attaine to, but they to whom it is given and granted by speciall priviledge from the Lord, & that it is a speciall honor vouchsafed to some, to suffer for the truth of God: and thou art to discern that honour, and to see it shining through the thicke cloud of their sufferings, and thou art to honour and esteeme them the more whom the Lord hath so honored, otherwise thou lookest not on them with a right eye, and thy heart is not right within thee.

Observe further in that the Apostle calls *Aristarcus* his prison-fellow, wee may easily, and we must needs conceive, that the Apostle had a companion, and fellow, one that did partake with him in his suffering, and did suffer the same things with him: and hence we may raise this point of doctrine. That the same afflictions befall divers of the children of God, that which one of Gods children suffers, another, yea it may be many others suffer the like, the cup of affliction in any kind, is not tempered, and appropriated to one child of God alone, but it is made ready for many of them as the father himselfe shall judge fit, and many of Gods children drinke of the same cup of affliction, no child of God is singular in his suffering, but he may find out a fellow sufferer, if he looke abroad into the world, and into the state of Gods children in former times.

Doct. 3.

The same afflictions befall divers of Gods children.

Gen. 26. 1 The text saith there was a famine in the land besides the first famine that was in the daies of *Abraham*, plainly shewing, that the Lord tried *Isaack* with the same affliction of famine, that hee had tried *Abraham* his father withall: Heb. 11. 36. The holy Ghost saith, others have bene tried by mockings, and scourgings, yea; moreover by bonds and imprisonments, giving us to understand, that howsoever the Saints suffered some one kind of affliction and some another, yet no kind of affliction was laid on any one alone, but others were fellow sufferers with him, and endured the like.

We

Wee see it then a cleere point, that no triall or affliction befalls one childe of God alone, but others also with him, bee hath fellow-sufferers. And this (for the use) may serve as a ground of great comfort to a childe of God: in time of some grievous afflictions, as the common saying is, it is a comfort to such as be in miserie to have a companion in their suffering.

And (indeed) there is matter of comfort to a childe of God in time of his affliction in this, that no other burthen is laid on him than was before, or (happily) now is borne by other of Gods children, and that hee may (if hee will) finde out a fellow-sufferer, one that is like to him selfe in suffering. In time of great affliction, Satan will bee busie with a weak Christian, and goe about to perswade him, and to fasten it upon him, that never any but he took up that crosse, or at least, was afflicted as he is: and sometimes he doth worke that perswasion into the hearts of some that are weak, and they sticke not to utter it, and to crie out, as the Church did, Lament. 1. 12. Was there ever any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted mee in the day of his fierce wrath? Oh never man nor woman suffered as I suffer, never any felt and endured that which I feele and endure. Thou art deceived; who-soever thou art, this is but one of thy weakenesse, it is not so; if thou be a child of God know it for a certaine truth, what thou doest abide, others of Gods children in like sort have abiden, and thy suffering, and measure of affliction, is no more a token of Gods displeasure to thee, than theirs was to them: but both to thee and them it is his messenger in love, for the exercise of thy faith, the triall of thy patience, or some other good end. The Apostle *Peter* speaks plaine to this purpose, 1 Pet. 5. 9. Resist the divell, stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren, which are in the world. If then Satan be busie with thee in time of thy affliction, and tell thee thou art an odde person, and thou differest from all Gods children in thy suffering, and that the Lord never dealt so with any of his children, tell him hee is a liar as he hath been. The Apostle whom thou oughtest to beleve hath taught thee another lesson, that the same afflictions are accomplished in thy brethren, which are in thee, although thou know them not, and therefore thou art no odde person, thou differest not from all Gods children in thy suffering. Ever remember it in time of thy grievous affliction, that no other triall, or affliction, is upon thee, than hath beene, or now is endured by other of Gods children, and thou art no other wise chastised than with that rodde, that hath beene laid on their backs, whose salvation is sure: and thou shalt finde it will bee a notable comfort to thee.

We are further to observe that the Apostle describing *Marcus*, and commending him to the *Colossians*, he sets him out by his kindred, that hee was *Barnabas* sitters some : that he was kinsman to *Barnabas*, that worthy servant of the Lord, and in that respect to be esteemed.

Hence we may easily gather thus much, that it is no small honour to be kin-
man to one that is a wortheie servant of God: it is a matter of dignitie to bee al-
lied and to bee of the kindred of such as are godly and excellent instruments of
Gods glory.

And hence it is that the Apostle not onely here, but elsewhere, remembers this title of honour, as Rom. 16. 7. *Andronicus and Iunia my kinsens.* Ver. 11. *Herodian my kinsman.* Ver. 21. *Lucius,* and *Jason,* and *Sopater* my kinsmen: whereby the holy Ghost would teach us to esteeme it as an excellent honour to bee of the kindred to a godly man. See then by this briefly, the great force of true pietie, and the account it is of, with the Lord: it is sufficient not only to get honour to those that have it, with all that are able to judge aright, but also to all their kindred; and such as be of the kindred to good and godly men, may rejoyce in this, and (after an holy manner) even boast in it, that they have wortheie ser-

 $V(\mathbf{r})$

Comfort to
Gods children
in time of their
grievous af-
flictions.

1862.

D.S.4.

It is a matter of honour and dignity to be of the kindred of such as are godly & worthy instruments of Gods glory.

Dr. I.

True pietie is
not onely an
honour to
those that have
it, but it brings
honour also to
all their kin-
dred.

37
as methinks
methinks methinks
methinks methinks
methinks methinks

Vse 2.
It is the greatest honor that can be, to be brother to the Lord Iesus, and the adopted son or daughter of God his father, in and through him.

Doff. 3.
After mutuall reconciliation betweene parties that have been at difference, all former offences ought to be cleane forgotten, and there ought to be a doing good one to another, as occasion is offered.
Vse.
A common saying amongst men iustly taxed.

vans of God to their kinsmen, and much more to their parents, that they are the children of godly parents, yet so as that by their example they bee stirred up to the like godlinesse, else that honour will turne unto their shame, both before God and men: for (as Salomon saith of age, Prov. 16. 31.) *Age is a crowne of glorie when it is found in the way of righteousness.* So to bee kinsman to some worthy servant of God, or descended of godly parents, is a crowne of glorie, if it bee set on the head of one that is godly and religious himselfe: else it is rather a dishonour unto him, and (without Gods mercie) it shall encrease his condemnation.

Againe, is it an honour to bee of the kindred to holy men and worthy servants of God? then much greater honour is it to bee brother to the sonne of God himselfe, the Lord Iesus, and the adopted sonne or daughter of God the Father, in him: that is the highest degree of honour that can bee vouchsafed to any. Worldly men esteeme it great honour to bee of the kindred of Noble-men, and great men in the world: but alas, it is but a shadow, or rather not so much as a shadow, compared to the true honour of the least of Gods Saints, to be brethren to Christ, and the adopted sonnes and daughters of God: and therefore let thy heart be affected with that honour, and be thou even ambitious, in seeking after that above all things in the world.

The Apostle further affirmes that touching *Marcus*, the Colossians had received commandements, that if hee came unto them, they should receive him: they had bene written unto concerning him, they had received letters (no doubt) of commendation touching him, and letters giving order and charge to them, and commanding them in the Lord, as the Apostle saith, *Philem. ver. 8. Though I be very bold in Christ, so command thee that which is convenient: so they had received letters (it may be) from the Apostle, by vertue of his Apostleship, commanding them, if Marcus, now a true and faithfull servant of Christ came unto them, they should give him kind and respective entertainment.* See then in the Apostle an excellent example of Christian behaviour, toward such as (having formerly offended) are now truly humbled for their offence, & shew forth evident signes of their repentance for the same. Though *Iohn Marke* had made defection not from Christ and Christian faith, but from the labour and worke of it, from going with *Paul* and *Barnabas* to the worke of the Lord, and therefore grievously offended: yet now having repented himselfe of his crime, and testified his repentance by his sincere care to promote the Gospell of Christ, the Apostle did put cleane out of his mind, his former offence, and esteemed him as a true and faithfull servant of Christ, and did commend him to the Church by his letters: he wrote letters of commendation on his behalfe, yea (as it may seeme) hee used his Apostolicall power, in charging them to whom hee wrote, that if *Iohn Marke* came unto them, they should receive him. We see then no former offences should bee remembered after the heart is truly touched for them, and repentance made knowne by infallible tokens: this point we lately stood on. I will now only adde thus much:

That no former offence to us in particular should be thought upon, after the partie offending, hath bene humbled, and hath made knowne his repentance, and we are mutuallly reconciled. After mutuall reconciliation betweene parties that have been at difference, all former offences ought to be cleane forgotten, as though they had never been: yea, there ought to be a commending of good things in the partie that hath offended us, and a doing good to him, as occasion is offered. And therefore doe not thou say (as commonly men use to say) I will forgive him, and I will be friends with him, but I will neither meddle nor make with him, I will neither buy nor sell with him, I will have nothing to doe with him, it shall be betweene us as it was betwixt the Jewes and Samaritans, *Ioh. 4. ver. 9.* If it be so, there is no sound reconciliation. Vpon sound and true reconciliation,

ciliation, there must follow a speaking, and a writing for the good of the partie that hath offended us, yea, a doing good to him, as occasion shall be offered: if that follow not, certainly there is no sound reconciliation, no reconciliation pleasing to God, and comfortable to thine owne soule.

Now further in that the Apostle saith, that touching *Iohn Marke*, the Colossians had received commandements, or letters of commendation, and had bene written unto, in his behalfe: we may see.

That letters commendatory may lawfully bee given unto men: certificates and testimonies in writing, touching the vertue, and good life, and conversation of men, for their better entertainment in strange places, may lawfully be granted.

Wee find that the Apostle thus yeelded commendations of *Phabe* in his epistle, Rom. 16. 1. I commend to you *Phabe* our sister: and it was an ancient custome in the Primitive Church, to give to some both professors and Preachers of the Gospell, letters of commendation, as wee may gather, 1. Cor. 16. 3. 2. Cor. 3. 1. which (indeed) the Apostle there saith, he needed not to, or from the Corinthians, because their conversion was his letter of commendation: need we (saith hee) as some other, Epistles of recommendation unto you, or letters of recommendation from you? verse 2. ye are our epistle written in our hearts, which is understood and read of all: yet thereby hee shewes it was the maner of the Church, to give letters of recommendation to some in those times: and so it is still lawfull for the Church, and Governours of it, to give and grant letters of recommendation to some in these daies, if so be they be carefull to certify nothing but the truth, and to commend none but such as are worthy to bee commended. It is a grosse abuse that hath crept into the Church, that many rovers and wanderers, who have been spued out of some place for some enormous sinne, they come to other places where they are not knowne, bringing with them, letters of large commendation: they bring many goodly vertues written downe in their papers, when notwithstanding a man may see many foule vices abounding in their lives.

It is a foule abuse to grant letters of commendation to such: it doth much hurt in the Church, especially if the persons so commended bee in the ministry, then they range up and downe and propound many times dangerous and poysonfull doctrines to the people, and by that, and by their bad example of life, they leave a miserable infection behind them: wheresoever they come, the Church and Governours of it should have care to repress them, and wee for our parts, if it come to us, to give letters of commendation and testimony, touching the life and conversation of any, must looke that wee certify nothing but the truth, and that we yeeld faithfull testimony and commendations to none but such as justly deserve commendation.

Come we now to the eleventh verse.

Verf. 11. *And Iesus which is called Iustus, which are of the circumcision. These only are my worke-fellowes unto the Kingdome of God, which have bene unto my consolation.*

WE find in the first words of this verse, the third person that sent salutations unto the Colossians, namely, (*Iesus*) commended by his fir-name (*Iustus*) *And Iesus which is called Iustus*: no mention is made of this man elsewhere in any place of the new Testament, unlesse it were that *Iustus* spoken of, Act. 18. 7. a worshipper of God, whose house joyned hard to the synagoge: whosoever it was, hee hath two names given him; first his name (*Iesus*) by which he was knowne among the Iewes, given him (no doubt) at his circumcision: the other his fir-name (*Iustus*) or in English (*Iust*) a name that was gotten, and

Doct. 6.

Letters of commendation may lawfully be given to men.

How and to whom letters of commendation may bee given.

Vse.

The giving of letters commendatory to unworthy persons reproveth.

Interpretation.

and usually given him for the notable uprightnesse, and just dealing used by him.

Object.

It may be will some say, the Greeke word hath no such signification.

Answer.

I grant it, it is true indeed, but we must know that the word is not a Greeke word, but a Latin, written in greeke characters: I say a Latine fir-name, given him among the Romans, with whom he lived, and it was given him as a token of great honor which they yeelded unto him: thus then wee are to conceive these words (*And Iesus which is called Iustus*) as if the Apostle had sayd, And Iesus known by that name among the Iewes, who for his upright and just dealing, is fir-named (by the Romans among whom he lived, in token of honour) *Iustus*, he also salutes you.

We are here first to consider the name (*Iesus*) given this man, at his circumcision: it was a name not onely given to Christ our Saviour, who was so named by the Angell. Mat. 1. 21. With the *etymologie* of the name: but to others also among the Iewes, in time of the old Testament.

Quest.

Here then a question may be moved. It may be demanded, whether the name (*Iesus*) may now be given to any child at his baptism, as it was among the Iewes, to some at their circumcision?

Answer.

I answer, no, it may not, and the reasons are these.

Doct. I.

That name Iesus may not be given to any child at his baptism.

Reason.

First, because now since the Incarnation and circumcision of Christ, that name, is a name of a person, who is more than a meete man, even God-man: it is now a name and title of God, and therefore may not bee given to any creature.

Againe, it is a name signifying a Saviour, appropriated to Christ, as both a perfect and absolute Saviour, and as the alone Saviour of man, the work of salvation being wholly, and onely wrought by him, and no part of it reserved to any creature in heaven or earth, according to that Act. 4. 12. Among men there is given none other name under heaven, whereby we must be saved.

And therefore now the name (*Iesus*) may not bee given to any child, at his baptism: and indeed it is a presumptuous, and bold part, of that pestilent brood of Iesuits, to take to themselves the name and title of Iesuites: that being a name, and title derived from the name (*Iesus*) the proper name of our Lord Christ, which ought not so much as by derivation, to bee put upon any creature whatsoever. Haply they will say, that we take to our selves the name of Christians, which is a name derived from Christ, and why then may not they take the name (Iesuite) derived from the name *Iesus*.

We have expresse warrant for the one, in the word of God: but not for the other. Act. 11. 26. we find the name (Christian) was given to the disciples at Antioch, not by the device of man, but by divine oracle, as the word there used signifieth: but we find no warrant for the name, Iesuite, in the booke of God: and certainly, it is a monstrous boldnesse and presumption, to arrogate and assume that name, that being derived from the most high and glorious name (*Iesus*) a name above every name, Phil. 2. 9.

But to make this of some use to our selves: howsoever we may not now give the name Iesus to any child at his baptism, yet as that name being a name of speciall signification, was given to some in time of the old Testament: so now may we give names to our children, that signifie and put us in mind of good things: we may give names to preserve the memory of some thing, to preserve the name and memory of parents, or kindred: especially if they have been godly, and religious: or to revive the remembrance of the life and profession of good men, by renewing their names.

And we must know that though our names that have beene given us at our baptism, bee not of some speciall signification, yet they should put us in mind of our new birth: they were given at the sacrament of regeneration, and new birth,

Use.

The Iesuites justly taxed for their bold presumption in taking to themselves the name of Iesuites.

Object.

Answer.

Names of speciall signification may now be given to children.

The use we are to make of our names.

birth, and whensoever they are recited, they should put us in minde of that, & of that vow and promise we made to God at our baptisme. When thy name was imposed on thee, and registred in the roll of Christians, thou didst promise in the sight of God, of his Angels, and of his people, to forsake the devill and all his workes: and whensoever thy Name is repeated, thou shouldest call to mind that vow, and endeavour to performe it: and if thou doe not, surely, thy very name shall one day be a witnesse against thee, and increase thy judgment.

Now further in that this Jesus was surnamed (Justus) or Just, in that he had gotten such an honourable Title among the Romans, as to be called Justus, and thorow his notable upright and just dealing amongst them: it teacheth us thus much:

That the Lord vouchsafeth titles of honour even in this world to his children, such as are true beleevers, and by their holy and righteous conversation, seek glory and honour: the Lord doth crowne them with honour, they have many times excellent epithetes, and titles of true honour given them, even in this world. We may see it, not only in this man, but in other examples also we find that *Abraham* is called (*faithfull Abraham*) he hath that honorable title vouchsafed him by the Apostle, Gal. 3. 9. and he is known by it to all nations. Thus *Noah* was called a Preacher of righteousness, 2 Pet. 2. 5. and *Lot* (*just Lot*) the same chapter and 7. verse: and thus the children of God are usually commended for some excellent vertue in them: yea certainly, by what gift, grace, or vertue soever the children of God and true beleevers, doe most of all glorifie God: in the same doth the Lord commonly vouchsafe them honour, and cause them to be revered, and magnified, even in this world. Thus *Joseph* for his wisdom (by which he much glorified God) was had in honour with *Pharaoh*, and the prophane Egyptians, Gen. 41. 38, 39. Can we find such a one as this is; a man in whom the spirit of God is? And *Pharaoh* said unto *Joseph*, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art. Thus *Phinehas* for his zeale in executing Gods judgements, was renowned from generation to generation, Psal. 106. 31. And on the contrary, wherein wicked men most of all dishonour God, therein commonly the Lord doth cause them to be branded with a note of infamy, even in this world, as *Jeroboam* hath often that blacke marke set upon him, *Jeroboam the sonne of Nebat* that made Israel to sin: it became as a sur-name to him. And *Judas* is often branded with that foule blemish of treason. *Judas the traitor*, or *Judas Iscariot*, that betrayed Christ: and the reason and ground of this is.

First, that speech of the Lord to old *Elie*, 1 Sam. 2. 30. saith the Lord to him, they that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. The Lord will certainly honour them that honour him, and he will bring shame and disgrace on them that dishonour him.

Againe, glory is an inseparable companion of goodnesse: and shame of sin, and therefore he that hath the one of them, cannot be without the other.

Now then, dost thou thirst after titles of honour? dost thou desire to have honour and estimation even in this present world? no doubt thou dost, for (indeed) a good name and good estimation in this world, is much to be desired, Prov. 22. 1. it is to be chosen above great riches, and above gold; why then, seeke it not in fleshly courses, but in the love of God, and of his Word, in the love of his truth, and in approving thy selfe both to God and man, in well-doing, that is the way to get thee title of honour.

It will be said, that is the onely way to get scorne, and contempt in the world: doe you not see that those who make conscience of sin, and have care to please God, and to approve their hearts and lives, to God and man in well-doing, they are counted as the basest, and as the offcowering of all things? they are pointed at with the finger, nick-named and many wayes abused.

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Dost. 2.

The Lord vouchsafes titles of honour to his children even in this world.

Note.

Reason 1.

Reason 2.

Use.

The right way to get honour and estimation in the world.

Object.

Answ.

Note.

It is true (indeed) but we must know, that it is not a good name and true honor, that is given by all men, or upon all occasions, but then only, when it is given for just cause, and by such as are of sound judgment, and have their eyes opened by the spirit of God, to see and discern, who are worthy to be honored. The wicked in the Scripture, are called fooles: now who will care what a foole or a mad man saith of him? but let us seek to approve our selves to the Lord in well-doing, and the Lord will crown us with honour and estimation amongst all good men: and that is (indeed) a good name, and true honor: yea if thou in uprightness of thy heart, labour to approve thy selfe to God and man, in wel-doing: assuredly how ever in this wicked world, thou be little accounted of, (if it did not so account of thee it were not like to it selfe) yet thou shalt be honored in the hearts of all Gods children: yea *sometimes thou shalt be honored in the conscience of some, whose tongues doe smite thee:* and therefore if thou be one that dost strive to keep faith and good conscience, and to approve thy selfe in wel-doing to God and man: be stirred up and encouraged to doe it more: undoubredly the Lord will cause thy righteousness to shine as the light, *Psa. 37. 6.* it shall be as cleare as the light, to the eyes of all that look on thee, and shall shine brighter and brighter: thou shalt have increase of honour, in this present world, and thou shalt find (through Gods mercy) everlasting honour, and an eternall waight of glory bestowed upon thee in the life to come.

The Apostle having thus commended and set forth these three, *Aristarchus, Marcus, and Justus*, by things proper to them, severally: hee comes to commend and set them forth by things common to all three, jointly together: as first.

That they were of the circumcision, (that is of the race of the Jewes, naturally descended of the Jewes, for so are the Jewes many times expressed in the New Testament, under that name or title, *Circumcision* *Rom. 3. 30.* *It is one God who shall justify circumcision of faith*, (that is the Jewes, as appears verse before; so *Tit. 1. 10.* *There are many* (saith the Apostle) *disobedient, and vaine talkers and deceivers of minds, chiefly they of the circumcision*, (that is) the Jewes.

Now in that the Apostle commended these three, *Aristarchus, Marcus, and Jesus*, being now converted to the faith, and being now beleeving Christians, that they were of the lineage and race of the Jewes: we are given to understand thus much:

Dolt. 3.
True beleeving Jewes may challenge it as an honour to them, that they are descended of such ancestors.

That it is so farre from being any disparagement or disgrace to true beleevers, to be descended of the race of the Jewes, as that (indeed) it is a matter of dignitie and honour to them: true beleeving Jewes may truly challenge it as a matter of honour to them, that they descended of such Ancestors: that they are come of them, who were a people, with whom the Lord made a speciall covenant.

For howsoever the body of that people generally fell away by their unbelief: yet that lets not, but that the remnant of them which believe, have some kind of priviledge above other people. The Apostle demanding, *Rom. 3. 1.* *What is the preferment of the Jew? or what is the profit of Circumcision?* he answers himselfe in the second verse: *much every manner of way: for chiefly because unto them were committed the Oracles of God: for what* (saith hee) *though some did not beleeve, shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid.* The beleeving Gentiles are become sons of God together with the beleeving Jewes: yet so as the Jewes, are (as it were) the first born, and the elder brother of the two: the Gentiles are not true branches of the Lords Olive, but such as of wild olive branches are naturalized: whereas the Jewes were naturall branches: and to the Jewes was the Gospel first preached by the commandment of Christ, *Mat. 10. 6.* and from them it proceeded to the Gentiles: and the Apostle reckons up many priviledges of the Jewes, *Ro. 9. 4.* that

that to them pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the service of God, and the promises. Therefore (doubtlesse) it is a matter of honour to true beleevving Jewes, for that they are descended of such progenitors: and this must first reach us.

Not to hate the Jewes (as many doe) because they are Jewes, but to hate their obstinacie, in rejecting Christ, and Christian Faith: but if they be true beleevvers, then to love them more, because they are Jewes: and seeing the Lord made such a speciall covenant with that people, and vouchsafed them such excellent prerogatives, and that they are descended of the holy Patriarks according to the flesh: in that respect, we are to love them, though they be yet uncalled, and to wish them well, and to pray for their calling, and for their conversion.

Againe, it is a matter of honour to the true beleevving Jew, to the Christian Jew, that he is descended of such progenitors to whom many excellent prerogatives did belong.

We may see then, that descent from excellent and worthy Ancestors, and from such as have many privileges joined with true faith, is (indeed) a matter of honor and dignity; bare descent from such ancestors is no matter of honour at all, unlesse it be joyned with true faith: but concurring and meeting together with true faith in Christ, it is a matter of great honour; yea certainly, in whom there is true faith in Christ, though the person beleevving be not of the Jewes (which is our case) yet to him (as one faith well) all the nobility of Christ his Ancestors according to the flesh, is communicated: to one that beleevves in Christ, be he Jew, or Gentile, even the Fathers and Ancestors of Christ, according to the flesh, are made his Ancestors, and he is honourable in them.

Abraham is his father, as the Apostle saith plainly, Gal. 3. 7. They which are of faith, the same are the Children of Abraham: but one that beleevves not in Christ, though he be a Jew by naturall birth, yet he is not to be esteemed as a true childe of Abraham, as the Apostle likewise saith, Rom. 9. 6. All are not Israel which are of Israel; and it is no matter of honour to such an one to be descended of the Jewes according to the flesh: and so in like case, admit it to be true that our adversaries, the Papists say, that their Pope, and their Bishops are successors of Peter, and of the Apostles, yet that personall succession is nothing worth, that is no matter of honour, except they can shew some good evidence that they likewise succeed them in the true faith of Christ, which they are neverable to doe; indeed, personall succession is of some worth, and to be esteemed of, and we reverently esteem of it, if so be true faith in Christ concur and meet with it: but to use the bare plea of antiquitie, and of personall succession, without the truth of faith, is but a vaine brag, and an empty title without honour.

Come wee to the second thing common to these three men, *Aristarchus, Marcus, and Jesus*, whereby, the Apostle commends them to the Colossians that these onely were his work-fellowes unto the Kingdome of God; that word of restraint (*onely*) is to be understood with limitation to the Jewes, as if the Apostle had said, these onely of the Jewes, or these only among them of the circumcision, are my work-fellowes (that is) joyne not only their hearts, but their hands even all their force and abilities with me to the furtherance of Gods Kingdome, and doe (indeed) with me, further, and help forward the Kingdome of God: the Apostle speaks in the time present, they are my work-fellowes, (*unto the Kingdome of God*.)

The Kingdome of God in Scripture, hath many acceptions: I forbear to speak of them, here it signifies the Gospel, or the whole word of God, the doctrine of the Prophets, & Apostles, & especially, the Doctrine of the Gospel.

And that it may thus be expounded, we have warrant for it, *Act. 18. 23.*

Use 1.

The beleevving Jewes are not to be hated, because they are Jewes, but they are the more to be loved even in that respect.

Use 2.

To be descended of excellent and worthy Ancestors, is an honour and dignitie, when it is joyned with true faith in Christ.

Note.

Personall succession is nothing worth without the truth of faith. Interpretation.

where it is said, that *Paul* expounded (to them that came unto him) and testified the kingdome of God; then presently is added, by way of exposition, and preached unto them concerning *Iesus*: taught them the Doctrine of the Gospel. And againe, verse 31. Preaching the Kingdome of God, and then followes, and teaching those things which concerne the Lord *Iesus Christ*.

Whence it is cleare, that the Kingdome of God is sometimes put for Doctrine of the Gospel: for (indeed) the Doctrine of the Gospel, is the Scepter of Gods Kingdome, and the speciall meanes whereby he reigneth among us, in which respect the Gospel is called the Gospel of the kingdome, *Mar. 1. 24.* and the rod of his mouth, and the breath of his lips to slay the wicked, *Isai. 11. 4.* and the arme of the Lord, *Isai. 53. 1.*

Thus then we are to conceive these words, (*these only are my work-fellowes unto the Kingdome of God*) as if the Apostle had said: These onely among the Jewes joyne their hearts and hands, even all their force, and abilities with me, to the furtherance of the Gospel: and doe (indeed) with me, further, help forward, and promote the Doctrine of the Gospel.

Now, first in that the Apostle thus commended these three men, *Aristarchus, Marcus* and *Iesus*, that they were his work-fellowes to the kingdome of God, in that he gave them this commendation, that they joyned hearts and hands together with him, in furthering and advancing the kingdome of God, in helping forward, and promoting the Doctrine of the Gospel.

Wee may easily gather thus much in generall: That it is an excellent and commendable thing, when men joyne together in the work of the Lord, when men joyne their hearts, and hands, even all their force, and abilities together, in advancing the Kingdome of God, in helping forward, and promoting the Doctrine of the Gospel: it is a matter most excellent and commendable.

For why? We know that a combination, and association, and joyning together of men in any good worke, is an excellent thing, deserving commendation, and the better the worke is, the greater commendation is it for men to joyne their hearts and hands together in the furthering of it.

Now the advancing of Gods kingdome, and promoting the doctrine of the Gospel is a most excellent work: for that being advanced, God is most glorified, and his Name every way most of all sanctified; therefore it must needs be a most excellent thing, when men joyne together in helping forward, and furthering the Doctrine of the Gospel; and specially when master-workmen, Ministers of the Gospel, joyne hearts and hands in that businesse: when they (as the Apostle saith, *Gal. 3. 9.*) Give the right hand of fellowship one to another, and joyn together as one man, in advancing Gods kingdome, when they joyne their studies, their labours, their learning, their utterance, their writing, and all their abilities to the furtherance of the Gospel.

That is an excellent thing indeed, and that is a speciall thing that we are to pray for, yea that is a speciall thing we doe pray for, if we pray aright, when we use that petition, *Let thy Kingdome come.* We are to pray to the Lord that the differences amongst the Ministers of the Gospel may be compounded, and that they may joyn hearts and hands and all their forces together, for the advancement of Gods kingdome, and for the bearing downe of the kingdome of sinne, Satan, and Antichrist: that they may joyn together as one man against the enemy of our salvation, and against all the adversaries of our comfort.

Again, is it an excellent thing when men joyn hearts and hands together, for the advancement of Gods kingdome, and furtherance of the Gospel? Surely then, wee must needs conceive on the contrary, that it is a vile and commendable thing for men, to joyn hearts and hands together, to hinder the doctrine of the Gospel: that is a fearfull high degree of sin, that is to be work-fellowes, not to the kingdome of God, but to the kingdom of the divell. Dost thou

Dost. 4.
It is an excellent thing when men joyne their hearts and hands together in advancing the kingdome of God.

Use 1.
Wee are to pray that the Ministers of the Gospel may joyne together as one man in advancing Gods Kingdome.

Use 2.
A vile and discommendable thing it is, when men joyne hands and hearts together to hinder the doctrine of the Gospel.

thou joyn hands with others, to hinder the doctrine of the Gospel? Dost thou together with others oppose the spreading of the Gospel, and course of good things? (a thing too common in the world) if the grace of the Gospel doe but peere out, and begin to appeare in any preiently men band themselves against it, they discourtenance it, and they joyne all their force and strength against it: dost thou, I say, joyne hand with such persons? Surely then, thou makest thy selfe guilty of a fearefull and high degree of sinne, and thou provokest the Lord to heavie wrath against thee: consider that place 1 Thes. 2. 16. The Apostle there saith, that the Jewes in hindring the course and spreading of the Gospel to the Gentiles, fill'd up the measure of their sinne: and it was a token that the wrath of God was come on them to the utmost: wouldest not thou then fill up the measure of thy sinne, and make it even ripe and ready for judgment? Wouldest thou not leale it up to the terror of thine owne soule, that Gods wrath is already seized upon thee, and that the Lord already sits in judgment on thee? then be not thou a work-fellow with those that openly hinder the course of the Gospel, and doe not thou joyne hands with them that oppose the grace of the Gospel, and good things: take thou heed of so foule a sinne.

Now more specially in the next place we are to marke, that the Apostle calls not these men his fellow-welwishers, or such as had only as good a will to the furtherance of the Gospel, as himselfe: but he calls them his fellow-workers, he saith, they were such as did some thing together with him, to the advancement of Gods Kingdome, and to the furtherance of the Gospel.

Hence we may gather this conclusion: that it is not enough for us to wish well together with others to the Kingdome of God, but we must doe something together with them that labour that way: wee must put our helping hands to that worke, we must joyne hands with them that endeavor and labour to advance the kingdome of God: yea though we be but private persons, yet if we doe something together with the Minister, that may serve to help forward the kingdome of God, and may further the Gospel.

This we find, that *Aquila* and *Priscilla* being tent-makers, and one of them a woman, yet were they the Apostles fellow-workers, so he calls them, Rom. 16. 3. The originall word is the same that is here used, they laboured together with the Apostle: so againe, vers. 9. of that Chapter, he called *Urbanus* his fellow-helper in Christ, and thus *Marcus*, *Arsinarchus*, *Demas*, and *Luke*, his fellow-helpers, *Philem*: Epist. vers. 24.

To make use of this; A man may heare sometimes many amongst us, wishing that things were well, and saying: Oh that men would yeeld to the Doctrine of the Gospel, and to the things they are taught in the publike Ministry of the Word, then it were an happy thing, then all would be well: alas, few there be that help forward any thing at all that way, few there be that joyne hands with the Minister, to help forward the kingdome of God.

And it may be, some thinke it is a matter not belonging to them, to helpe forward the Doctrine of the Gospel, but that it pertaines only to the Minister: indeed principally it belongs to him, but thou must know, it belongs to thee also, being a private person in thy place and calling: thou must within the compasse of thy calling be a fellow-worker with the Minister to the advancement of Gods kingdome, and promoting of the Doctrine of the Gospel.

Alas, how shall I that am a poore man be a fellow-worker with the Minister, and help forward, and promote the Doctrine of the Gospel?

Thou maist be so, many wayes: by instruction, by counsell, by admonition, by consolation, by good example, and the like; but especially by these two things.

1 First, by remembering the Doctrine delivered by the Minister and conferring upon that, and even whetting that upon thy children, servants or neighbours,

Dott. 5.

It is not enough for us to wish as well as others to the furtherance of the Gospel, but we must doe something together with them that labor that way.

Use.

Such as onely wish well to the Doctrine of the Gospel, and yet help it not forward any thing at all, are reproved. It belongs to private persons within compasse of their callings to helpe forward the Doctrine of the Gospel.

Object.

Ans.

In two things especially, may private persons help forward the Doctrine of the Gospel.

ושבות

Two motives
to stir up pri-
vate persons
to helpe for-
ward the Do-
ctrine of the
Gospel.

Peter was ei-
ther not at
Rome when
this Epistle was
written, or else
hee was much
too blame.

Doct. 6.
The Doctrine
of the Word
and Gospel
is that where-
by God doth
rule and raig-
n amongst us,
and over us, in
speciall man-
ner.

neighbours, as the Lord commanded his people, Deut. 6. 7. *And thou shalt*
* *rehearse* (the word signifies to sharpen) *them continually unto thy children,*
and thou shalt talke of them when thou tarriest in thine house, and as thou walkest
by the way, and when thou lyest downe, and when thou risest up.

2 Secondly, by earnest and hearty prayer to God for a free passage of the
Gospel, 2 Thes. 3. 1. *Pray* (saith the Apostle) *that the Word of the Lord may*
have free passage, and be glorified even as it is with you.

These two wayes, thou art especially to joyne hands with the Minister, and
become a fellow-worker with him: in the advancement of Gods Kingdome,
and to further the advancement of the Gospel.

And to stirre thee up to this duty, consider only these two things.

1 First, where there is conscience of this duty, experience shewes it; there
is much profit by the publike Ministry of the Word: and where this is neg-
lected, there is little or no good done by the most faithfull, and powerfull
Ministry of the Word: the Minister may spend his heart out of his body, and
doe little good, if he have no work-fellowes to help forward the Doctrine
of the Gospel.

2 Againe, consider that thou prayest to the Lord that his Kingdome may
be advanced; thou saist, *Let thy kingdome come*, and yet hast thou no care to
help forward Gods Kingdome? What is this but to mocke God, who cannot
be mocked, and to deceive thine owne soule? Thou dost by that prayer of
thine (thou not caring to helpe forward Gods Kingdome) provoke the
Lord to wrath against thee: and of thine owne mouth hee will one day
judge thee.

If thou then desire that the Ministry and preaching of the Word of God
should be much profitable to thy children, thy servants, and others: yea, if thou
wouldst not provoke the Lord to punish thee, as a mocker of his Majesty, and
of thine owne mouth to judge and condemne thee: then be thou fird up
carry in thee a conscience of this duty, be thou a fellow-worker with the Mi-
nister to the Kingdome of God; joyne hands with him, to help forward the
Doctrine of the Gospel, by counsell, by admonition, by consolation, by good
example, and the like: but especially, by whetting the Doctrine delivered by
him in the publike Ministry of the Word upon thy children, thy servants and
others, and by earnest and hearty prayer for a blessing upon the preaching of
the Gospel, and thou shalt find much comfort in so doing.

Further observe wee (in a word) the Apostle saith, these onely among the
Jewes, were his work-fellowes to the Kingdome of God. Where then was
Peter? it is like he was not at Rome when the Apostle writ this Epistle: whe-
ther he was there at all, or no, I will not dispute, but it cannot be that he sate
there as Bishop 25. yeares, as the Papiests hold as an Article of their Creed:
either he was not at Rome when this Epistle was written, or else hee carried
himselfe little better, than when he denyed his Master.

One thing yet remaines to be considered of us, namely, the forme and man-
ner of speech here used by the Apostle (*the kingdome of God*) he puts down the
Kingdome of God, for the Doctrine of the Word and Gospel.

The point hence offered is this; that the Doctrine of the Word, and espe-
cially the Doctrine of the Gospel, is the kingdome of God: the Doctrine of the
Word and Gospel, is that whereby God doth in speciall manner rule and raig-
n amongst us, and over us, (I say in speciall manner) for by his universall govern-
ment and providence, he rules over all things, both in heaven and earth, yea
over the divels and damned in hell, as the Psalmist saith, Psal. 29. 10. the Lord
remaines a King for ever: but in speciall manner doth the Lord rule and raig-
n, by the Doctrine of his Word and Gospel, by that doth he exercise his Kingly
power and authority over his Church and children.

And

And hence is the Doctrine of the Gospel called the power of God; 1 Cor. 1. 18. and vers. 24. the power of God, and the wisdom of God: yea, hence it was that our Saviour said, Joh. 5. 25. that the houre should come, and then was, that the dead should heare the voyce of the Son of God, and should live: the Lord doth rule and work so powerfully by the Doctrine of his Word and Gospel, as that thereby he quickneth, and giveth life to the dead, even to such as are dead in their sinnes, and makes them live a new spirituall life, and yeeld obedience and subjection to him: and therefore by that doth hee rule and raigne amongst us, and over us, in speciall manner: and the reason of this is this. The Word and Gospel, is one of the Lawes of Gods kingdome of grace, and hence is the Word, the Doctrine of the Gospel, called the Word of the kingdome, Mat. 13. 19. and the Law of faith: Rom. 3. 27. Where is then the rejoycing (saith the Apostle) it is excluded: by what Law? of workes, nay, but by the Law of faith, by the Doctrine of the Gospel.

No. as an earthly King doth rule and raigne over his subjects, and keepes them in awe and order, in speciall manner by the Lawes of his Kingdome: so doth the Lord by his Word and Gospel, and by the Lawes of his kingdome of grace: and therefore by that doth he in speciall maner rule and raigne amongst us, and exercise his Kingly power over his Church and children.

Hence then it must needs follow, that the more or lesse the Doctrine of the Word and Gospel prevaieth with us, the more or lesse the Lord raigneth amongst us, and over us, by the Doctrine of his Word and Gospel, the more or lesse are we subject to the speciall government of the Lord: if the Doctrine of the Word and Gospel be powerfull and effectually amongst us, then doth the Lord rule and raigne amongst us, in speciall manner, as our King and Governour: if that be powerlesse and fruitlesse, and if that have no power nor fruit amongst us, surely then the Lord raignes not amongst us in speciall manner: the Lord is then in no other sort our King and Governour, but as he is King over the reprobates, yea, over the devils and damned in Hell, even by his generall providence: yea, let every one in particular examine himselfe touching this point: doth the Lord rule and raigne over thee, and in thee, by the doctrine of his Word and Gospel? then is he thy King and Governour, in speciall manner; if he doe not so raigne and rule over thee and in thee, certainly thou art not under his speciall Regiment and government: and thou must know, it is not enough for thee, onely to have understanding of the Letter of the Word and Gospel, but thou must know and feele the power of it.

The Doctrine of the Word and Gospel is the Kingdome of God: it is in it selfe the arme of the Lord, and his ruling power, and it must be so to thee, else thou art not under his speciall government: thou must feele the Doctrine of the Word and Gospel, teaching thee to humble thy selfe in due consideration of thy miserable state wherein thou art by nature; and to deny thy selfe in a true acknowledgement of thine owne corruption; and to lay fast hold upon Christ, who is the light of thy salvation: yea, thou must find the Doctrine of the Gospel, teaching thee (as the Apostle saith, Tit. 2. 12.) to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, to live soberly, and righteously and godly, in this present world: yea the power of the Gospel must be seene in thy attire, that thou goest comely, not vainly and garishly: in thy speech, that it be gracious, not idle, wanton, or blasphemous: in thy whole carriage, and in all the actions of thy life.

If the Doctrine of the Word and Gospel be not thus powerfull over thee, and in thee, assuredly the Lord is not thy King and governor, in speciall manner: thinke on it, and hereby examine thy selfe, and if thou find that thou art not under the speciall government of the Lord, thy case is fearfull. hasten out of it as soone as possibly thou canst, thou art in a miserable state and condition,

Use.
Tryall of our selves, whether wee be under the speciall government of the Lord or no.

thy case is worse than the case of other creatures in the world, that are subject to the general government and providence of God: for thou art subject to the power of the divell; thou art his slave, and the divell holdeth up his scepter in thee, he is thy Lord and King: therefore *Paul* said, *Act. 26. 18.* that he was sent to the Gentiles to turn them by the preaching of the Gospel, from the power of Satan to God. Ignorant people and prophane persons cannot abide to heare of this, that the divell should rule in them, and that he should be their Lord and King, they spit at the naming of the Divell, and they say, fie on him, and they defie the divell with all their heart: but alas, so long as they live in their ignorance, and prophanenesse, they are under his power; so long as thou livest in thy pride, thy covetousnesse, thy usury, thy maliciousnesse, thy drunkennesse, thy whoredome, thy swearing, or any other pleasing sinne, thou art from under the speciall government of the Lord, and the Divell is thy Lord and King: for there are but two regiments and kingdomes in the world, the Kingdome of Christ, and the Kingdome of Satan; and if thou be not in the Kingdome of Christ, thou art in Satans kingdome.

Againe, consider that condemnation and everlasting perdition, is the portion of all that have not Christ for their head.

Note.

Now Christ is head to none, but such as have their life from him: and none have life from Christ, but they that are ruled and governed by him: and hee rules none but by the power of his Word: and therefore if thou be not ruled, and ordered by the Doctrine of the Word and Gospel, thou art in a fearefull condition, thou hast Satan ruling over thee, as thy Lord and King, and thou art liable to everlasting perdition. Consider this, thou that art an ignorant person, thou that art a proud person, a drunkard, &c. and finding thy selfe in this miserable thraldome, hasten out of it by all possible means: never rest till thou find that thou art made subject to the Doctrine of the Word and Gospel, and that it is powerfull in thee, causing thee to lay aside thy former sinne, and turning thee to all holy obedience: then thou maist be sure that thou art under Gods speciall rule and government.

Use 2.

Comfort for all that cheerfully subject themselves to the Doctrine of the Word and Gospel.

Againe, is it so that the Lord doth in speciall manner rule, and raigne over his Church, and children by the Doctrine of his Word and Gospel? Here is then matter of great comfort for all that cheerefully subject themselves to the Doctrine of the Word and Gospel: they are under the speciall rule and government of the Lord; the Lord is their King and governor in speciall manner, and to them as to the true and loyall subjects of his Kingdome, are all the benefits of his Kingdome belonging, and communicated, even the spirituall and eternall benefits of Christ, as faith, true conversion, remission of finnes, righteousness, the gifts of Gods Spirit, & continuance of the same, glorification, and life eternall, and they are made partakers of that glory, to be Kings, and Priests unto God, *Rev. 1. 6.* which is an excellent comfort, and to be thought on, by all that truly submit themselves to the Doctrine of the Word and Gospel. And thus we have handled the second thing, whereby the Apostle commended these three men, *Aristarchus, Marcus, and Jesus*, common to them all, that they onely were his work-fellowes unto the kingdome of God.

Come we to the third and last thing, whereby he sets out their commendation jointly together, in the last words of this verse: that they were to his comfort and consolation, (*which have been unto my consolation*) and this in part is an effect of the former, namely of their joining hands with him, to the advancement of the kingdome of God, and to help forward the Doctrine of the Gospel: therein they were to the Apostles consolation. The word here rendred *consolation*, signifies also counsell and encouragement: and so the meaning is briefly this: Which have been to my comfort, to my counsell, and to my encouragement.

Interpretation.

Now

Now for matter of Doctrine hence offered: first, in that the Apostle saith, these three men *Aristarchus, Marcus, and Jesus*, helping forward the Kingdome of God, and furthering the Doctrine of the Gospel together with himselfe, were to his consolation, and did thereby much comfort him.

We are to understand thus much, that the advancers of the Kingdome of God, and such as with others further and helpe forward the Doctrine of the Gospel, they are a consolation to the godly, and especially to the Ministers of the Gospel.

It is a great comfort to the Ministers of the Gospel, when they see others joyn hands with them to the advancement of Gods kingdome, and to the furthering of the Gospel. For why? if their hearts be rightly affected, and set as they ought to be for the advancement of Gods glory: if the first and chiefe thing they aime at, and seek after, be the kingdome of God, and his righteousnesse, as it ought to be, Mat. 6. 33. it must needs be that such as together with themselves, doe further and advance the same, are a great consolation to them, and minister sweet comfort to their hearts.

Wouldst thou then be a comfort to the Minister of the Gospel? dost thou desire to cheere up his heart, and to hearten and encourage him? O then joyn hands with him in advancing the Kingdome of God, and in helping forward the Doctrine of the Gospel: it may be thou bearest true love to a faithfull Minister of the Gospel, and thou wouldst be glad to doe him any good thou art able; here is the way to do the best good and to yeald him the greatest comfort: joyn thy hands with him in advancing the Kingdome of God, and in furthering the Doctrine of the Gospel, and that will be an excellent cordiall to the comfort of his heart: thou canst not minister matter of greater joy and consolation to him, by any thing, than by so doing.

Now further in that the Apostle saith, these three men, *Aristarchus, Marcus, and Jesus*, had been to his consolation and encouragement, and been in stead of Counsellors to him in some things, he being an Apostle, and a man of excellent gifts and graces, and they no doubt farre inferiour to him in gifts and graces: it teacheth us, that even men of great gifts and graces have need sometimes of encouragement, of counsell, and comfort, from such as be of meaner gifts and graces than themselves.

And hence it was that our Apostle said, he longed to see the Romans, Rom. 1. 12. that he might be comforted together with them, through their mutual faith, both his and theirs. And (indeed) the reason of this is plain, namely this: The Lord doth not give all gifts to any one man, nor the like measure of the same gift to every man: but to some one gift, and to some another: to some a greater, to some a lesse measure of the same gift: yea, the Lord doth sometimes so dispose his gifts, as that a man of meaner place and fewer gifts, hath some singular and speciall gift, whereby he may helpe, and doe good to others, of higher place, and of greater gifts.

This then must teach us not to despise men of meaner gifts than our selves: Doe not thou in regard of thine excellent knowledge, wisdom, or any one gift, or grace of God bestowed on thee, lift up thy selfe above others, and disdain to have familiar conference and speech with men of meaner gifts than thy selfe: no, no, doe thou stoop downe to conferre with them, and to listen to things said by them, and take thou benefit of some gift (haply) more eminent, and in greater measure in them, than in thy self: though thou excell them in knowledge, yet it may be, they goe beyond thee in good affections, and thereby they may doe thee good, they may be meanes to stirre up thy zeale, to quicken thy love, or the like: yea certainly thou maist finde some good by having speech and conference with the meanest of Gods children.

Dost. 7.

It is a great comfort to the Ministers of the Gospel when they see others joyn hands with them to the advancement of Gods kingdome.

Reason.

Use.

The right way to cheere up the heart of a faithfull Minister, is to joyn hands with him in advancing Gods kingdome.

Dost. 8.

Men of great gifts & graces neede sometimes encouragement, counsell, and comfort from men of meaner gifts and graces than themselves.

Reason.

Use.

Men of meaner gifts than our selves are not to be despised of us.

Verf. 12. *Epaphras the servant of Christ, which is one of you, saluteth you, and alwayes striveth for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and full, in all the will of God.*

Verf. 13. *For I beare him record that he hath a great Zeale for you, and for them of Laodicea, and them of Hierapolis.*

THe Apostle in this 12 and 13 verses still goes on in the second branch of his conclusion, namely, the declaration of the love of others that were with him towards the Colossians: and here he sets downe the love of *Epaphras* towards them, manifested and made knowne by two things.

By his salutations sent to them, and by his prayers for them.

That he saluted them, and that he prayed for them. Now these things are not thus nakedly and barely propounded, but first the Apostle describes *Epaphras*, by two qualities or conditions.

First, by his calling, that he was the servant of Christ.

Secondly, by that particular relation that was betweene him and the Colossians, that he was one of them, *Epaphras the servant of Christ, which is one of you, saluteth you.*

And then the Apostle further sets out *Epaphras* by his praying for the Colossians.

First, by the manner of his praying, that it was with striving and earnest contention, and that continually, in these words (*and alwayes striveth for you in prayers.*)

Secondly, by the matter of his prayer, what it was he prayed for on their behalfe, namely this, that they might stand perfect, and full in all the will of God.

And then verse 13. the Apostle doth discover the efficient cause of that earnest striving of *Epaphras* in prayer for the Colossians, that it proceeded from his zeale for them: which zeale of his is further set out by the measure, that it was great: and by the extent of it, in regard of the persons to whom it reached, that it reached not only to the Colossians, but also to them of Laodicea, and them of Hierapolis: and it is also confirmed by the testimony of the Apostle, *I beare him record he hath a great Zeale for you, &c.* In which testimonie is also prevented a secret objection for haply the Colossians might have said to the Apostle.

Object. How know you that *Epaphras* striveth in prayer for us? are you privie to his private prayers, for therein especially, if he doe remember us, he makes mention of us?

Now this objection the Apostle prevents, when he saith, (*for I beare him record that he hath a great Zeale for you, &c.*) As if he had said: Howsoever I am not privie to his private prayers, yet I dare boldly write, that he striveth for you in prayer, because I am privie to, and a witnesse of a great zeale that he beares to you, and to them of Laodicea, and them of Hierapolis. And thus we see the generall things that are laid downe in these two verses.

Come we now to speake of them, as they lie in order, and I will take the words as they are laid downe before us.

First therefore of these words (*Epaphras the servant of Christ, which is one of you, saluteth you, and alwayes striveth for you in prayers.*)

Epaphras the servant of Christ That first title (*servant of Christ*) is not here to be taken in a generall signification, as it is common to all the faithfull, who are servants of Christ, 1 Cor. 7. 22. but in a speciall sense, for the Minister of Christ: for so the Apostle called *Epaphras*, chap. 1. 7. and therefore this title (*servant of Christ*) is not here given to him as a qualitie and condition, com-

mon to him with all true beleivers: but as signifying his particular office and function, that he served Christ in the Ministry of the Gospel. (*Which is one of you*) How these words are to be taken, we shewed verse 9. namely thus: who is one of the same Citie and Church with you, (*salueth you*) that is, wisheth you health, prosperity, and all true happinesse that can be. (*And alwayes striveth for you in prayers.*) The word (*striveth*) is metaphoricall, borrowed and taken from such as withstand open violence and hostility: or from such as earnestly strive for masteries or life, against such as seek to take it away: and it is here put, to signifie earnestnesse and fervencie of spirit. (*Alwayes*) That is, whensoever he doth humble himselfe in prayer (which he doth often) he remembers you. Thus then are these words to be conceived, (as if the Apostle had said: *Epaphras* that serves Christ in the Ministry of the Gospel, who is one of the same Citie and Church with you, wisheth you health, prosperity, and all true happinesse and comfort: and whensoever he doth humble himself in prayer, (which he doth often) he is mindfull of you, and with earnest contention of mind, and fervencie of spirit, he prays for you.

Now first in that the Apostle calls *Epaphras* the servant of Christ, thereby meaning the Minister of Christ, or that he served Christ in the Ministry of the Gospel, we are taught thus much:

That the Minister of the Gospel is the servant of Christ: yea the Minister of the Gospel in regard of his function and office, is in speciall manner the servant of Christ; he is Christ his servant in more particular manner than men of other callings: it is his profession, and (as it were) his trade, to be the servant of Christ, even to serve the Lord Jesus, in bringing his message, and his embassage to the people of God, that is his place and office. And therefore the Apostle saith in plain termes, 2 Cor. 5. 20. that the Ministers of the Gospel are Ambassadors for Christ, and in Christ his stead doe entreat Gods people to be reconciled unto him: 1 Cor. 4. 1. Let a man so think of us as of the Ministers of Christ, and disposers of the secrets of God. And hence it is that the Apostle often calls himselfe and other Ministers of the Gospel, the servants of Christ: as Rom. 1. 1. Paul a servant of Jesus Christ. Phil. 1. 1. Paul and Timotheus the servants of Jesus Christ. Tit. 1. 1. Paul a servant of God, &c. Yea the Divell himselfe plainly and freely confessed this truth, though not in love to the Ministers of the Gospel, Act. 16. 17. These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

Now then this serves to teach Ministers of the Gospel a speciall duty: are they in peculiar manner servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and Master? are they sent out from him on his message and ambassage? surely then they must looke they deliver nothing but that which is both according to his will, and for his glory. A good servant will doe the will of his Master, and what his Master appoints him, and what he requires of him, and will seeke his Masters credit in all his courses: and so ought the Ministers of the Gospel, ever to have an eye to the will of Christ, their Lord and Master, and to seeke his glory in all things: those Ministers forget their office and calling, that they are the servants of Christ, who deliver their owne fancies, and new found devices, or apply their speeches and teaching to the humours of men, and seeke to please men. Galat. 1. verse 10. If I should yet please men, I were not the servant of Christ: Ministers that are men-pleasers are not the true servants of Christ.

Again, here is matter of comfort for all true Ministers of the Gospel. For why? are they in speciall maner servants of the Lord Jesus, to whom all power is given in heaven and in earth? Mat. 28. 18. they may then be bold to deliver the message the Lord hath put into their mouths: they have a Master will make it good, and they may boldly stand in the face of all that oppose them and

Dott. 1.
The Minister of the Gospel is in speciall manner the servant of Christ.

Use 1.
Ministers of the Gospel must looke they deliver nothing, but that which is according to the will of Christ, and for his glory.

Use 2.
Comfort for all true Ministers of the Gospel.

Use 3.
Men are to
esteem the
Ministers of
the Gospel, as
the servants of
Christ.

Dott. 2.
Wee must ear-
nestly pray for
others toge-
ther with our
selves, and e-
specially those
with whom we
stand in speci-
all relation.

Reason.

Use.
Reproofe of
such as seldom
or never pray
for others to-
gether with
themselves
with any ear-
nestnesse.

and gain say it: they have a Master that is able and willing to defend them: and this is an excellent comfort unto them.

Now further, is it so, is a true Minister of the Gospel in speciall manner the servant of Christ? then learne thou so to esteem him, even as the servant and ambassadour of the Lord of glory: and take heed thou offer him not the least contempt or wrong, in word or deed: though he be (haply) poore and weak, yet he hath a Master that is mighty and powerfull, and will mightily revenge the wrong done to his servants. *Isabel, Isabel, and Julian* found it by wofull experience: and no age or state can shew the contrary, that ever any contemner or abuser of a true Minister of God, escaped the visible vengeance of God, and his revenging hand on him, or his: therefore take heed how thou dost wrong or abuse a Minister of the Gospel.

I should now speak of two titles the Apostle here gives to *Epaphras*, (that he was one of the Colossians) and likewise of his saluting of them: but of those things we spake ver. 9. 10. and therefore I passe by them, and come to these words (and *alwayes striveth for you in prayers*.) Where first in that the Apostle saith, that *Epaphras* did strive in prayers for the Colossians, that whensoever he humbled himselfe in prayer, he prayed for them with earnest contention of minde, with fervencie of spirit: we are plainly taught

That we must pray for others together with our selves, we must be earnest in prayer for others, and pray for them with a fervencie of spirit, especially for those with whom we stand in some speciall relation, and with whom we have neere conjunction: for *Epaphras* was the Minister of the Church at Colosse, and he prayed earnestly for the Colossians, as he was their Minister: and so must we be earnest in prayer for those with whom we stand in some speciall relation, and with whom we have neere conjunction: as the Minister for his people: the Magistrate for those that be under his government: the Master of the house for his family, &c.

We have examples of this in other places of Scripture, as that of *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 12. 23. *God forbid (saith Samuel) that I should sin against the Lord, and cease praying for you.* *Samuel* accounted it a sinne, if he should cease praying for the people. And that of *Moses*, Psal. 106. 23. where it is said, that he stood in the breach, no doubt by earnest intercession and prayer, to turne away the Lords wrath from the people: and thus (doubtlesse) did *Job* sanctifie his children, by earnest and hearty prayer for them, Job 1. 5. And the reason of this is plaine, namely this.

Wee are to have a lively fellow-feeling of the wants and necessities of others, (and as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 12. 25.) we ought to have the same care one for another, as members of the same body, and especially of the wants and necessities of them, with whom we are more neerly knit and conjoyned: and therefore out of that lively feeling of the wants of others, and especially for such as are neerly knit unto us by any speciall bond, we are to send out earnest and hearty prayers for them, and to call on the Lord even with fervencie of spirit, for a supply of their wants.

A duty wherein many of us are much defective, many seldome or never pray for others together with themselves with any earnestnesse & fervencie of spirit: it may be thou art sometimes earnest in praying for thy self (necessary, or extremity pressing thee, the hand of God in some heave affliction driving thee to it) but in praying for others, oh how cold art thou? yes (I feare me) I may justly speake it, many seldome or never use any earnest prayer for their owne families, for their owne children, and those that belong unto them: haply thou saist, God blesse my children, and God make them his faithful servants, (which I speake not against) but when didst thou strive in prayer for them? when didst thou powre out thine heart, as *David* said he did, Psal. 108. 4.

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in the behalf of thy children, thy servants, or for the wife of thy bosome? I appeale to the hearts and consciences of many, they can tell them, they have seldome or never done it: wel remember, this is thy duty thus to pray for others together with thy selfe, and that with earnestnesse of spirit, and especially for those, to whom thou owest speciall duty, for thy wife, thy children, thy servants: and to that end, consider their speciall wants and necessities, and if thou neglect this duty, it is a plaine evidence thou hast not such a feeling of other mens wants and necessities, as thou oughtest to have: and it is an argument thou art not a lively member of the same body with them, whereof Christ is the head: and if thou pray not earnestly for thy wife, children, and servants, and out of a feeling of their wants, thou hast not that love, and that care of them, that ought to be in thee, and without repentance thou shalt one day answer for it: yea many times it comes to passe, that a man that makes no conscience of this duty, even to be earnest with the Lord in prayer for supply of such grace as is wanting in his wife, children and servants, he finds the punishing hand of God upon him in his wife, children, or servants: the Lord doth punish him with an unruly wife, with gracelesse children, and with lewd servants; therefore learn thou to make conscience of this duty.

Now further in that the Apostle sets down *Epaphras* his manner of praying for the Colossians under that metaphoricall word (*striver*) a word borrowed and taken from such as withstand violence and hostility, or such as strive for masteries: we are givento understand:

That it is no easie thing to pray well: to pray to God truly and heartily is no easie matter: true and hearty prayer is ever with striving, and wrestling against opposition, and it is as hard a matter to pray truly and heartily, as it is to withstand a strong armed man, that seeks to take away life from us.

And therefore the Apostle not onely here, but in other places also, useth this phrase and forme of speech; as Rom. 15. 30. *I beseech you for the Lord Jesus Christs sake, and for the love of the spirit, that ye would strive with me by prayers to God for me.* and 2 Cor. 1. 11. (saith he) *that ye labor together in prayer for us:* plainly teaching: that true and hearty prayer is with much labour and striving, and the reason of it is this: There be many things that oppose, and stand against making of true and hearty prayer to God:

As first, the malice of Satan, who seeks (if possibly he can) to keep us from praying at all, by troubling our minds, and disturbing our hearts with passions of love, feare, anger and the like: if he cannot so doe, then he labours to make us hasten out of our prayers, and to post them over hastily, or to pray coldly or faintly.

Secondly, our owne corruption, the deadnesse and dullnesse of our owne hearts, our want of feeling of our wants, our want of holy desires and the like, they stand up against that holy exercise of prayer: the evill examples of other, who either neglect that duty of prayer, or coldly performe it, only for fashion and custome; these be the things that stand up against us in prayer, and with these are wee to strive and wrestle in making true and hearty prayer. And therefore it is no easie matter to pray well, and to offer up prayers to God truly and heartily.

And therefore deceive not thy selfe, do not thou think, as many doe, that it is an easie matter to pray well, and to make hearty prayer to God: no, no, learn this lesson, and remember it: that to pray truly and heartily, is a thing that is done with as much paines and labour, as if thou were to wrestle and struggle with a strong man that seeks thy life: some foolishly think, and they stick not sometimes to speak it, that having lived many yeeres in scraping wealth together, and hunting after riches, when they are old, then they will goe to the Church and pray: alas poore soules, how are they blinded, as if it were the

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easiest

Note.

Doff. 6.
It is no easie thing to pray well.

Reason 1.
Hinderances of true and hearty prayer.

Use 1.
They deceive themselves which thinke it is an easie matter to pray well.

easiest matter in the world, to pray well: indeed, to pray formally, and to say prayers, (as some use to speak, that they have said their prayers) and you may beleeve them, their mouths only have prayed, their hearts prayed not: they prayed not with any due reverence of the great and glorious Majesty of God; with any sound feeling of their owne wants, or with any holy desire of the things prayed for: and so to pray is an easie matter indeed: but that is but lip-labour, and (indeed) lost labor, yea hatefull and displeasing to God. Remember thou (if thou wouldst pray well, and so as the Lord may accept thy praier) that it must be with much striving, thou must find in thee a striving against the malice of Satan, and against the deadnesse and dulnesse of thine owne heart, yea there must be an holy violence used in thine heart, when thou prayest, and that is to pray truly and heartily.

Againe, is it so, that true and hearty prayer is ever with striving and wrestling against opposition?

Here is then matter of comfort for such as finde sometimes a deadnesse, and dulnesse creeping upon themselves in the holy exercise of prayer, if so be they doe truly strive against these things; some are much cast downe, and discouraged, and they thinke their prayers are not pleasing to God, because they find sometimes in themselves a deadnesse, and dulnesse, and many by-thoughts cast into their minds: but consider with thy self, dost thou strive against these? Art thou displeased with them? Dost thou sigh and groan under them? and are they so heavie a burthen unto thee, as thou canst only stammer out a prayer unto God? Comfort thy self, even that stammering prayer of thine, is true and hearty prayer, and well-pleasing to God: thou hast an example for thy comfort in this kind, Isa. 38. 14. *Like a Crane or a Swallow, so did I chatter, I did mourn as a Dove. Hezekiah* was so pressed with grief, as that his prayer was only like the chattering of a Crane, he was not able to utter a perfect sentence, yet was his prayer heard of the Lord: so if thou be able onely to utter a stammering praier in regard of thy deadnesse, and dulnesse, sometimes creeping upon thee, yet if thou sigh and groane under it, if thou pray against it, and by all good meanes strive against it, and look for the perfection of thy prayers in Christ; assuredly thy prayers are true and hearty prayers, and well-pleasing in the sight of God, and that is an excellent comfort to be thought on, by all such as find a deadnesse and dulnesse sometimes creeping on them in prayer, and are displeased with it, and doe truly strive against it.

Before wee come to that which followeth, a question is to bee answered: namely this.

In that, true and hearty prayer is ever with striving against opposition, it may be demanded, whether a man may strive in prayer, that useth a set forme of prayer?

To this I answer, that he may: a man that is not able to conceive a form of prayer in words, as some are not, for want of memory, utterance, and other gifts or grace needful to the conceiving of a praier, such a man helping himself by a set form of prayer, by a prayer composed, and made by others, may use it with striving, for his heart may go with his mouth, and he may be stird up, and have a feeling of the want of the things that are prayed for: but yet let not any man herein take liberty to himselfe, at all times to use a set-form of prayer, for that cannot at all times expresse his particular wants and necessities, and therefore let every one labour that he may be able to conceive a prayer, and to take to himselfe words, as it is, Hos. 14. 3. And if a man or woman be suddenly pressed by some calamity, or some sinne pressing the conscience, and that person is not able to conceive a prayer, then let him, or her, in such a case, rather goe to the Lord with sighing, and groaning with sighes that hee cannot expresse in words, as the Apostle saith, Romans 8. 26. then betake him-

Use 2.
Comfort for
such as finde
sometimes a
dulnesse and
deadnesse up-
on themselves
in praying.

Quest.
Whether a
man may strive
in prayer, in a
set forme of
prayer.

Ans.

Note.

Doff. 4.
Perseverance
in sound know-
ledge and in
sincere obedi-
ence to Gods
will, is the
free gift of
God.

Use 1.
The popish o-
pinion consu-
ted, that men
regenerate are
able to doe
good and to o-
bey Gods will
without con-
currences of
new grace fol-
lowing.

Use 2.
Such as are
truly regene-
rate, are to ac-
knowledge at
all times their
own impoten-
cie and insuffi-
ciencie to any
good thing.

Doff. 5.
Constancy &
perseverance.

and full in all the will of God, implying that they were already sound and sincere in knowledge and obedience to the will of God: and he prayed for their constancie and continuance in the same.

Wee may easily gather, that constancie and perseverance in sound knowledge, and in true and sincere obedience to Gods will, is the free gift of God. *Epaphras* prayed for it, that the Lord would give it to the Colossians: it is not only Gods free gift to be found in knowledge, and sincere in obedience, but it is his gift also to stand, continue, and goe on in that soundnesse, and in that sinceritie: the Lord gives to know and to obey his will: and he gives also continuance in that knowledge and obedience.

And howsoever, such as have sound and saving knowledge, and sincere obedience to the will of God, truly wrought in them, shall never wholly fall away from it (for the feare of God is put into their hearts, that they shall not depart from God, *Jer. 32. 40.*) Yet they stand not by any power from themselves, but by the power of God, *1 Pet. 1. 5. They are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.* It is the power of God that upholds them, and it is the Spirit of God that doth still stir and move their minds and wills (being already regenerate) to mind and to will that which is truly good, and makes them able to bring forth good actions, which otherwise, they are not able being hindered by the flesh, so long as they are in this life. Hence it was that *David* after his regeneration, prayed to the Lord to incline his heart unto his Testimonies, *Psal. 119. 6.* The Church prayes for new drawing, *Cant. 1. 3. Draw me, and we will run after thee:* and the Apostle witnessing of the Philipians, *Phil. 2. 12.* that they had alwayes obeyed: yet he addes, verse 13. *That it was God that wrought in them, both the will, and the deed, even of his good pleasure, it was not of themselves that they were able to will or worke any good thing.*

And so hee plainly teacheth this point: That to continue in sound knowledge, and sincere obedience to Gods will, and to goe on in the same, is the free gift of God.

First this meets with that opinion of the Papists, who teach that men regenerate are able to do good, and to obey the will of God, and to go on without concurrence of new grace following: which is a meer falshood, it cannot stand with the truth now delivered,

For if it be the free gift of God to continue in sound knowledge and sincere obedience: certainly then (beside the first grace working regeneration) there must be a subsequent second grace vouchsafed from the Lord, that makes the regenerate doe, and worke that good, which they are made able to doe by grace: it cannot be otherwise.

Again, is it so that to continue and persevere in sound knowledge and sincere obedience to the will of God is the free gift of God? Then let those in whom the Lord hath wrought sound saving knowledge, and a measure of sincere obedience to his will, ever acknowledge their own impotencie, & insufficiency: that though they be truly regenerate, yet they are not able to doe any good thing, but by a continued supply of new grace: and let them ever acknowledge that their standing and perseverance in sound and sincere obedience to the will of God is meerly from the Lord: and let him have all the glory, and be thou ever watchfull in prayer for constancy and perseverance, because thy standing is by grace, and it is the free gift of God.

Now in the next place, in that *Epaphras* prayed so earnestly, and with such fervency, for no other grace but this, that the Colossians might constantly continue and persevere, and go on in sound and sincere knowledge, and obedience to the will of God, we are plainly taught:

That constancie and perseverance in sound, sincere, entire, and full knowledge, and obedience to the will of God, is an excellent thing, it is a speciall grace

grace for such as are sound and sincere in knowledge, and obedience to the will of God: to stand fast, to continue, and to goe on in the same, without starting aside, or back-sliding.

We finde in the Scripture many exhortations, and sentences to this purpose, as that 1. Cor. 16. 13. *Stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, and be strong*, and that Rev. 2. 10. *Be thou faithfull unto the death, and I will give thee the crowne of life*: and this warning hath our Saviour given, Luk. 9. 62. *He that putteth his hand to the plough and looketh backe, is not apt for the kingdome of God*: Paul blamed the Galatians, Galat. chap. 3. vers. 3. and called them foolish, for being in the spirit, and then seeking to be made perfect in the flesh: for not holding on, as they had begun. Many other places of Scripture beate upon this point, and perswade to continuance, and perseverance in grace, and holy obedience, as a most excellent thing, and a speciall grace: and the reason of it is this.

Of all graces, and vertues, it is onely constancy, and perseverance, that shall be crowned. As no sinne condemnes a man but his finall impenitence, a finall continuance in his sinne: so no grace, or vertue shall be crowned, but that which continues to the end.

It is onely continuance, and perseverance, in faith, in love, in the feare of God, and in profession of religion, that shall be crowned with glory: we shall finde it most true which the Prophet speakes, Ezech. chap. 18. vers. 24. *If a righteous man of a hundred yeeres old, forsakes his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and doe according to all the abominations that the wicked man doth, the Lord will also forget all his righteousness he hath done: and (as our Saviour saith Mat. 24. 13.) he that endureth to the end, he shall be saved: and therefore wee may safely conclude, that continuance, and perseverance in sound and sincere knowledge, and obedience to the will of God, is a most excellent thing, and a speciall grace.*

If then thou hast entred into profession of religion, if thou hast begun to shew thy selfe sound in knowledge and sincere in obedience to Gods will; Oh be constant in that soundnesse, and in that sincerity: go on in the same, remember it is a most excellent thing to stand perfect, and full in true knowledge, and obedience to Gods will: and this is a needfull exhortation, and cannot be often enough and sufficiently urged, in this back-sliding age, and in these declining times of ours, wherein many shrinke backe, and start aside from the sound and sincere profession of the Gospel, and obedience to Gods will. Some have heretofore seemed to be sound and sincere in professing the faith, but now they shrink backe from that soundnesse, and sincerity, and (as Christ said to the Church of Ephesus Revel. 2. 4.) have lost their first love: some heretofore seemed to have care to sanctifie the Sabbath, to traine up their families in the feare of God, to pray with them, and seemed to make conscience of other holy duties: but alas, now they are shrunke backe from their first love, and former workes, and there is now in them, almost an utter forsaking of all good duties: well, remember whosoever thou art, that there is no pleasing of God, nor hope of glory, without perseverance in sound and sincere obedience to Gods will, to the end. *The Lord is an eternall God, and his will eternall, and he requires a perpetuall service, and obedience.* Remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and repent, and doe thy former workes. And (to returne to our exhortation begun) if thou beest one that art yet sound and sincere in the profession of the Gospel, in knowledge, and obedience to Gods will: be stirred up to stand fast, and to goe on in the same, and to that end further consider these two things.

First, the Lord receiveth much more dishonour by the back-sliding of such as (having entred into the profession of the Gospel) doe afterwards fall away, either renouncing faith, or denying the power of it by an ungodly life, then

in sound knowledge and obedience to Gods will is an excellent thing.

Reason.

Note.

Vs.

Such as have begun to shew themselves sound in knowledge and sincere in obedience to Gods will, ought to go on in the same.

Note.

1. Motives to stirre up such as are sound &c.

sincere in the
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2. Speciall
things requi-
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fession of the
Gospel.

2

Confutation
of the Fami-
lists, holding
an absolute
perfection in
the regenerate
in this life.

Doct. 6.

In sound and
sincere obedi-
ence to Gods
will is requi-
red a conformi-
ty to all the
will of God.

than he doth by the ignorance, and impiety of such as never entertained that way. And secondly, the falling from grace (though but in part) is dangerous, it is an hard thing to recover that fall, it will cost thee many a sigh; and many a salt teare, and haply, thou shalt never recover the feeling of that comfort, that once thou hadst.

The state of those that fall backe from the profession of the Gospel, is more dangerous, and more hard to be recovered, than of those that never entred into the way of godlinesse, 2. Pet. 2. 20. and therefore if thou bee entred into sound and sincere profession of the Gospel, labour to stand fast, and to continue in the same, and that thou mayest so doe, looke there bee in thee these two things especially.

First, a receiving of the Gospel, with a love of it, simply for it selfe, even for the excellent comfort of it, and not for any by-respect, not for honour, profit, praise of men, and such like: if thou receive the Gospel in respect of honour, profit, and the like, thou wilt hold the profession of it, no longer than it may stand with the enjoying of those things: and if by occasion the Gospel hindred the holding of those things, then farewell the profession of it.

Secondly, looke there be in thee a mortified heart, an heart emptied of all secret unbelieve, secret hypocrisie, and spirituall pride: take heed none of these doe lurke, and lie hid in thine heart, Hebr. 3. 12. Take heed saith the Author of that Epistle, lest at any time there be in any of you, an evill heart, and unfaithfull, or an heart of infidelity to depart away from the living God. And if these things be in thee,

A receiving of the Gospel, with a love of it, simply for it selfe.

And a mortified heart, emptied of all secret unbelieve, hypocrisie, and spirituall pride: undoubtedly thou having begun to professe the Gospel, thy beginning shall have increase, and at last a perfect worke, and thou shalt bee able to stand fast, and to hold on the constant profession of the Gospel.

Now from these words (*perfect and full in all the will of God*) In that the Apostle saith (*perfect and full*) the foolish Familists thinke they have ground for their absurd and foolish opinion, that there is an absolute perfection in the regenerate in the time of this life: but alas, their light braines are deceived, and the spirit of error deceives them. I shewed before how the words are to bee taken, namely, perfect and full, in regard of soundnesse and truth. I have heretofore shewed the vanity and absurdity of that opinion, chap. 3. 14. I will not now stand on the large confutation of it, only call to mind that distinction, that then I made that there is a perfection of parts, and a perfection of degrees: a perfection of parts is an holinesse in all the faculties of the soule, and in all the parts and members of the body, having the seeds of all necessary vertues with an endeavour to obey God in all things, and that is in the regenerate, in the time of this life. But perfection of degrees, that is an holinesse in all the powers of the soule, and parts of the body: perfect in measure and degree, that is not in any in this life, for as the Apostle saith, 1. Cor. chapter 13. verse 9. the most regenerate know but in part, therefore other graces are in them proportionably, but in part, not perfect in degree, in the time of this life: but I leave them.

Note one thing further, in that Epaphras prayed that the Colossians might stand perfect, sound and sincere in obedience to all the will of God:

We are taught, that it is not enough to perfection, and filling to soundnesse and sincerity, that in some or many things we endeavour to please God, but there must be in us a conformity to all the will of God.

There must be in us a soundnesse and sincerity in respect of the whole will of God revealed, as David said, Psalm. 119. verse 101. *I have refrained my feet from every evill way, that I might keepe thy word:* and verse 128. *I esteemed all*

all thy precepts most just, and hate all falseways: so must we doe, else we are not sound and sincere in our obedience to Gods will.

In this case we must have no partiall affections, we must not hate one sinne and love another: Herod went so farre, and did many things John taught him, but still he would have his brothers wife: so haply many hate covetousnesse, and love drunkennesse: others hate drunkennesse, and love swearing: and every one almost will have his darling sinne: and if it be so with thee, thou art not sound and sincere in thy obedience to Gods will. If thou wouldest bee sound, there must be in thee a purpose and an endeavour (howsoever thou canst not but fall) to obey God in all things, and at all times: and know thou, that even one sinne wherein thou livest wittingly and willingly, defiles thy whole life, and the divell will not much trouble thee: if he hold thee intangled in any one sinne, that is enough to draw thee downe to perdition, as a little leake in a ship, not stopped, will sinke the ship: and he that makes not conscience of some one sinne, is guiltie of breaking the whole law, Jam. 2. 10. Therefore if thou wouldest bee sound and sincere, and have comfort in thy obedience to the will of God, looke there be in thee, a full purpose and an endeavour to obey God in all his commandments.

Come we to the thirteenth verse.

Vers. 13. *For I beare him record that he hath a great zeale for you, and for them of Laodicea, and them of Hierapolis.*

In this verse, as we have shewed, our Apostle doth discover the efficient cause of Epaphras his earnest striving in prayer for the Colossians, that it proceeded and came from his zeale for them: and this verse hath respect to the former, as an argument or reason, proving that Epaphras did strive in prayer for them, taken from the efficient cause of it, namely his zeale towards them, and that zeale of his, is further set out by the measure of it, by the extent of it, and by the Apostles owne testimonie, *For I beare him record that he hath a great zeale for you.* The words of this verse need no long exposition, *For I beare him record*, or I witnesse with him, I yeeld him my testimonie, *that he hath a great zeale.* The word (*zeale*) in Scripture, hath many significations: but having here relation to the Colossians and others, it signifieth a fervent affection of love, a burning love, a love that cannot lie hid, but is like to a fire that is hot, and often breakes out into flame: for you Colossians, and for your neighbours them of Laodicea, and them of Hierapolis (for Laodicea and Hierapolis were neighbour townes or cities not farre from Colosse.)

This then is briefly the meaning of the Apostle in the words of this verse. For I witnesse with Epaphras, that he hath a burning love, even a love that oftentimes, like fire flames out, and shewes it selfe, both towards you, and towards your neighbours, them of Laodicea, and them of Hierapolis.

Consider we the Apostles argument in this place, in that the Apostle proves Epaphras his striving in prayers for the Colossians, by laying forth his zeale towards them, as the efficient cause, and root of it: he plainly teacheth us thus much:

That out of zeale towards others, ever comes fervent prayers for them: yea, the point is, and may bee generall: out of zeale, out of burning love towards others, ever comes a carefull performance and practice of all good duties towards them as occasion is offered: and according to the measure of zeale, so is the practice of good duties: a great zeale brings forth fervent prayers, and carefull performance of every good dutie; and where zeale and burning love is wanting, there is either a neglect of good duties altogether, or a doing of them for fashion, or for by-respects.

And

Use.

Wee must not carry in us partiall affections in respect of sinne.

Interpretation.

Dof. 1.

Zeale and burning love towards others, ever brings forth a carefull performance and practice of all good duties towards them.

And for further prooffe of this, the example of *Paul* is most pregnant: he, in many of his epistles, makes knowne his zeale, and his fervent love towards those to whom he wrote: and thereupon his carefull performance of good duties, issuing out from thence, even his carefull instructing, admonishing, reprov- ing, comforting, and praying for them, as occasion was offered. 2. Cor. 7. 3. Hee saith the Corinthians were in his heart, to dye and live together: and from that love of his, it was, that he made them sorry with a letter, vers. 8. and hee saith, vers. 12. That he wrote that letter unto them, to manifest, and make knowne his care towards them, in the sight of God. From his love, and from his care towards them, came his carefull reproofe (of that which was amisse in them) by his letter. 1. Theff. in the second and third chapters, he doth notably cleere the truth of this point, in his owne example, chap. 2. hee saith, hee was affected to- wards the Thessalonians, as a Nurse, and as a father to his children: and being thus affectioned (saith he) vers. 8. *Our good will was to have dealt wnto you, not the Gospell of God only, but also our owne soules: because ye were deare unto us.* And then vers. 11. that from that love it was, *that he exhorted them, and com- forted them, and besought every one of them, as a father his children.* And chap. 3. vers. 1. he saith; *Wherefore since wee could no longer forbear: as if hee had said, My love towards you was such, and so strong within mee, it was like a fire in my breast, I could no longer keepe it in: and from thence it was, that I sent Timothy our brother to establish, and to comfort you touching your faith.* A plaine evidence and prooffe of this, that out of zeale and burning love towards others, ever comes a carefull performance of all good duties: and the reason of this is very plaine, namely this.

Reason.

True love is ever industrious, and painfull for the good of those that are beloved: and according to the measure of it, so is it more or lesse industrious and painfull. And therefore certainly, out of zeale, and burning love, ever comes carefull performance of every good dutie.

Vse.

Whence it is that men altogether neglect the doing of good duties to their brethren, or else doe them coldly in by-re- spects.

Hence then wee may easily conceive, whence it is that men are not carefull, and conscionable in performance of good duties towards their brethren; even from hence: they have no heate in them, they have no burning affection of true love in their hearts towards their brethren; their hearts are either taken up with selfe-love, or with doting and corrupt partiall love: and thence it is that they either altogether neglect the doing of good duties to their brethren, or they doe them coldly, and faintly, or in sinister and by-respects: we must therefore labour to have our hearts seized and possessed with a zeale, and with a burning affection of love to our brethren: and that we erre not touching this point, but may both rightly conceive this zeale, and be perswaded to the embracing of it (being rightly conceived) I will stand a while to shew.

First, what this zeale is.

Secondly, the sorts of it.

Thirdly, how it is to be manifested.

Fourthly, in whom it ought to be found.

And then (after some examination of our selves touching the same) I will use some motives to stirre us up, to put on and to expresse this holy affection.

What zeale is.

First, therefore know we, that zeale or burning love towards our brethren, is a fervencie of spirit, arising of a mixture of love and anger (for zeale is a mixt affection, causing men to seeke the good of their brethren, and moving them to indignation and griefe, when any thing is done to the hurt of their brethren, or that may hinder their good.) And this fervencie of spirit, causing men thus to doe, is twofold, either according to knowledge, and guided by the word of God: or it is blinde, and not according to knowledge, as was that of *Paul* before his conversion: Philip. 3. 6, *Concerning zeale, I persecuted the Church.*

Two sorts of zeale.

Now

Now thirdly, touching the manifestation of this fervencie of spirit (causing men to doe as hath been laid) it is to be manifested two wayes.

First, by doing good according to the ability and the meanes we are able to use, to the soules of our brethren: by instructing, by counselling, and by comforting them, or by praying for them: thus did *Epaphras* in this place, he had a zeale toward the Colossians, and he made it known by striving in prayers for them: thus did *Paul*, as we have seen in the places before cited.

Secondly, by removing or turning away, or at least endeavouring to turne away evill (as we are able) from the soules of our brethren, by shewing our holy anger and indignation against their finnes, by admonition, by reproof, or by correction, as just occasion is offered. Thus did *Moses* (after the children of *Israel* had committed that foule sinne in worshipping the golden Calfe) manifest his zeale, both in respect of Gods glory, and towards the people, by his holy anger and indignation against them for that sinne. He (as we find, *Exod.* 32. 20.) took the Calfe which they had made, and burned it in the fire, and ground it unto powder, and strowed it upon the water, and made the children of *Israel* drink of it. And he sharply reproveth *Aaron*, *verf. 21.* What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them? Now in the fourth place for the persons in whom this zeale to our brethren ought to be found: we must know, that it ought to be found in all, but especially in Magistrates, in Ministers, and such as have any way the government of others, as here we see it was in *Epaphras* a Minister, and so in *Moses*, in *Paul*, and such like publike persons. So then the sum of all that hath been said touching zeale to our brethren, is this: All men, but especially Magistrates, Ministers, and such as have the government of others, are to have their hearts seized with a fervencie of spirit, arising of a mixture of love, and anger, causing them (according to the direction of the Word of God) to seek the good of their brethren, and moving them to indignation and griefe, when any thing is done to the hurt of their brethren: and they are to manifest that fervency of spirit, by doing what good they are able, to the soules of their brethren, by instruction, by counsell, by comfort, and by prayers, and (as they are able) to remove and turne away, or at least endeavour to turne away evill from their brethren, by shewing holy anger against their finnes, by admonition, by reproof, or by correction, as just occasion is offered.

This is that zeale and that burning affection of love that we are to have our hearts possessed withall, and especially Magistrates, and Ministers, and such as have the government of others, and thus are they to manifest it to their brethren. And now if we doe examine our selves touching this holy affection of zeale to our brethren: where (almost) is it to be found? where (almost) is that man that hath the government of others in any kind, that Magistrate, that master of a family, or the like, that hath in him a fervencie of spirit, causing him to seeke the good of the soules of those that are under him, shewing it forth by instruction, by good counsell, by comfort, by fervent prayer, and moving him to indignation and griefe for their finnes, manifesting that, by holy anger, by admonition, by reproof, by correction, as just occasion is offered? Doe not many Masters and Governours, not only neglect these good duties, to those that be under them, but many times even countenance them in their finnes? doe they not many times stand by their children, and servants, and heare them raile, curse, and sweare, and many wayes misdeemean themselves, and yet shew forth no manner of griefe and indignation, nor dislike for the same? Doe they not suffer them to breake the Sabbath without controulment? yea sometimes such as have the government of others stand by them in the open streets, when they are at their sports, and vanities, and look on them, and never open their monthes to reprove them. This is for want of zeale to our brethren, we have not

Zeale is to be manifested a wayes.

1

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Zeale ought to be found in all, but especially in publike persons and such as have the government of others.

Reproofe of such as want zeale to their brethren.

Two motives
to stirre us up
to labour after
zeale, and bur-
ning love to-
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Dott. 2.
Gods children
have some-
times in them
a great mea-
sure of zeale
and burning
love to their
brethren.

Use 1.
That popish
opinion con-
futed, that
men cannot
know whether
they have
grace in them
or no.

not our hearts possessed with that burning love towards them that ought to be in us: and therefore in a word or five, to stirre us up to labour after this zeal, and this burning love towards our brethren, and especially such as are under our government, consider first of all, that if thou have not a zeale in thine heart towards thy brethren, thou shalt never doe good duties to them carefully, and conscionably: and if thou doe them not carefully and conscionably, the doing of them is not pleasing to the Lord: for it is not the good duty done, that is pleasing to him, unless it be done in truth, and sincerity of heart, and affection: and in all good duties done, he looks rather to the affection of the doer, than to the deed done.

Againe consider this, if thou have not in thee a zeale towards thy brethren, and especially towards such as bee under thy charge, thou hast not any true zeale to Gods glory; his glory is not deare unto thee; for certainly as many as have zeale to the glory of God, they have also a zeale and burning love to their brethren, and they desire that God may be glorified by others, as well as by themselves, and they are grieved when God is dishonoured, when they heare or see him dishonoured by any, and especially by those that be under their charge.

If then thou wouldest doe good duties to thy brethren (and especially to those that are under thy charge) carefully, and conscionably, and so as they may be pleasing to God:

And if thou wouldest make it cleere, that thou hast a zeale to Gods glory, and that his glory is deare unto thee, (which indeed ought to be more precious and deare unto thee, than thine own salvation) then labour thou to put on zeale and burning love to thy brethren, and especially to those that be under thy charge: never rest till thou find in thee a fervencie of spirit, even a mixture of love and anger, causing thee (according to knowledge) to seek the good of their soules, by all good meanes, and moving thee to an holy indignation and griefe, when any thing is done, that may be to the hurt of their soules.

In the next place, we are to mark the Apostles amplification of *Ephraim* his zeale, by the measure and extent of it, that it was a great zeale, extended to the Colossians, and to them of Laodicea, and them of Hierapolis.

Hence note we in a word, that sometimes the children of God have in them (though not a perfect) yet a great measure of zeale, and burning love to their brethren, and that extended to many of their brethren: for (as the Apostle *Peter* saith, 1 *Pet.* 1. 22.) *The children of God have their soules purified in obeying the truth through the spirit, to love brotherly without faining,* so as sometimes they come to love one another with a pure heart fervently. They have not only that grace of true love to the brethren begun in them, but they many times feele it fervent and hot within them.

Now then, this being so, that the children of God, many times have in them a great measure of love, even a zeale and burning love to their brethren: that opinion of the Papists must needs fall to the ground, that men cannot know whether they have grace in them or no. For so they hold, when they are pressed with it, that a beleever may be assured of his salvation by the testimony of the Spirit, and by grace wrought in him; they answer, that a man cannot know whether he have faith and grace in him or no. This opinion of theirs cannot stand with the truth now delivered, that the children of God have many times that grace of true love to their brethren in a great measure, and a burning love unto them: for can a living man have fire in his naked bosome and not feele it warme? no more can a man have a zeale and burning love to his brethren in his heart, and not feele the heat of it, it is not possible: and therefore it is but a fancie, that a man may have grace in his heart, and not feele it.

Againe, is it so, that the children of God have many times even a zeale and burning

burning love to his brethren? let this then lead us to a conſideration of the greatneſſe of Gods love to his children: for why is there ſometimes in men, (that are compaſſed with many infirmities, and have in them ſuch dregs of corruption, ſo long as they are in this life) ſuch a meaſure of love to their brethren, as their love is a zealous and burning love? how exceeding great then is the love of God to his children, who is the perfection of love, even love it ſelfe, 1 Joh. 4. 5. His love to his children farre exceeds the love of the beſt men in the world: even as farre as God himſelfe excelleth duſt, and earth, ſin, and corruption. A ſweet comfort, and let it be laid up in the hearts of all Gods children. Haſt thou an aſſurance of Gods love ſhed abroad in thine heart? then comfort thy ſelfe: his zeale, his burning love to his children, is like to himſelfe, infinite, and unchangeable: it was the ground of ſending Chriſt, as the Prophet ſaith, *Iſai. 9. 7. The zeale of the Lord of Hoſtes will performe this:* and the Lord having once loved thee, his love will never faile thee, but undoubtedly bring thee to eternall happineſſe and bliſſe.

One thing further we are to marke: the Apoſtle doth not barely affirme it, that *Epaphroditus* had a great zeale to the Colofſians, &c. but he confirms it by his owne teſtimony: and to the end they might be fully perſwaded of it, he ſaith, *I beare him record, or witneſſe, that he hath a great Zeale for you, and for them of Laodicea, and them of Hierapolis.*

The point hence ariſing is this: That we are to witneſſe the good things, and the good graces that are in our brethren, when our witneſſe and teſtimony may doe any good, when our witneſſe may be to Gods glorie, to the praiſe of his gifts, or may win more credit to their grace and gifts, that they may be more able to doe more good by them. Thus did the Apoſtle in this place: and thus did our Saviour give teſtimony to *John*, *Matth. 11. 11. Verily I ſay unto you, among them which are begotten of women, aroſe there not a greater than John Baptiſt.* Thus are we to doe, only remembering this rule.

That wee witneſſe the good things that are in our brethren, and ſpeake of them rather in their abſence, than in their preſence, unleſſe in caſe of extreme dejection of mind: otherwiſe we are rather to ſpeake of them in their abſence, than in their preſence: for though we witneſſe the truth, yet our teſtimony in the hearing of our brethren themſelves, may ſeem rather to favour of flatterie, than of any good liking of thoſe good things, and (through the corruption of nature) it may be an occaſion of making the partie proud, and highly conceited of himſelfe.

Come we to the fourteenth verſe.

Verſ. 14. *Luke the beloved Phyſician greeteth you, and Demas.*

IN this verſe the Apoſtle doth further manifeſt and declare the love of two other men, that were with him, towards the Colofſians, namely, of *Luke*, and of *Demas*, that they alſo ſent greeting and ſalutations to them: and the firſt of theſe he ſets out over and beſides his name, by his particular calling and profeſſion, that he was a Phyſician: to which is added an epithete, or adjunct of further commendation, (*beloved*) that he was a beloved Phyſician, *Luke the beloved Phyſician greeteth you:* and *Demas* he only names, without adding any further title of commendation to him.

Who this *Luke* was, it is doubtfull, and ſome think it was *Luke* the Evangelift that writ the Goſpel, and the Acts of the Apoſtles: others think it was not he, but ſome other man of that name, to which opinion I rather incline, becauſe in all likelihood, if it had bin *Luke* the Evangelift, the Apoſtle would rather have given him that title, than the title of Phyſician, that being a more excellent title, and of greater honour and dignitie. And againe, the Apoſtle ſpeaking

Uſe 2.

The great zeal that is found in Gods children ought to lead us to a conſideration of Gods great love to his children.

Note.

Doſt. 3.

We are to witneſſe the good things, and graces that are in our brethren, when our witneſſe may doe any good.

When we are to witneſſe the good things that are in our brethren.

Interpretation.

speaking of him, 2 Tim. 4. 11. he onely names him without addition of Evangelist. That which they (who hold him to be *Luke* the Evangelist) doe alleage for their prooffe out of *Philem. Epist. vers. 24.* that he was *Pauls* fellow-helper, is not of sufficient weight to prove it: for some were his fellow-helpers, that were no Evangelists, nor Ministers, as appeares *Rom. 16. 3. Aquila* and *Priscilla* Tent-makers, were his fellow-helpers: but who this *Luke* was, it is not much materiall. They that hold him to be the Evangelist, say also that he was a Physician, one that had skill in that faculty of Physick, and in curing bodily diseases, and therefore without further inquiry we may keep to this title *Physician* here given him by the Apostle.

Luke the Physician] The Apostle addes (*beloved.*) The original Text runs thus: *Luke the Physician that beloved*: the meaning is, *Luke* the Physician beloved of God, and for his pietie, religion, and Christian carriage in his calling, singularly beloved of me, and of all true Christians that knew him. (*and Demas.*) This *Demas* was he (no doubt) of whom afterwards the Apostle complained, 2 Tim. 4. 10. that he had forsaken him and embraced this present world. We need not further stand upon these words touching the meaning of them.

Now in that the Apostle sets out *Luke* by his particular calling and profession, that he was a Physician, (not to enquire, why it was that *Paul* had a Physician in his company, I hold that a needlesse thing) we have a manifest allowance given to Physicke, and to Physicians.

Dott. 1.
It is a lawfull
and commendable
course of
life to be a pro-
fessed Physi-
cian.

That to be a professed Physician, one that hath skill to cure the bodily diseases of men, is an approved facultie, and a lawfull and commendable course of life, otherwise the Apostle would never have commended *Luke*, by this terme (*Physician*) if to be of that profession, were not lawfull, and very profitable, and comfortable unto the sonnes of men. But further to prove this, we find that the Spirit of God hath given approbation of Physick in other places of Scripture. *Jerem. 8. 21.* the Prophet bewailing the hurt of the people, even the misery that was to come on them for their sins, he wisbeth (*vers. 22.*) that their hurt might be healed: and he sets downe his wish by way of expostulation, in metaphoricall termes, taken from balm, which is precious for curing of hurts and wounds, whereof there was great store in *Gilead*, as appeares *Gen. 37. 25.* and from Physicians: saith he, *In there no balm in Gilead? is there no Physician there?* And *Job 13. 4.* *Job* compares his friends to unskilfull Physicians: saith he, *all you are Physicians of no value.* In that parable, *Luk. 10. 34.* it is said of the Samaritan, by way of commendation, that he bound up, and powred in oyle and wine into the wounds of the man that lay wounded between *Jerusalem* and *Jericho*, which (indeed) was a practice of Physick: for wine serves to cleanse and to ease the paine within, and oyle to mollifie the flesh, and to allay the paine without: to which the Prophet alludes, *Isai. 1. 6.* *They have not been wrapped nor bound up, nor mollified with oyle.* But most pregnant for proof of the point in hand, is that speech of our Saviour, comparing himself to a Physician, *Mat. 9. 12.* saith he, *The whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick.* In which comparison, he shews plainly, that there is sometimes necessary and good use of the Physician for the body: and therefore his calling is lawfull and commendable. And the reason of this is evident, namely this, the Lord hath put many excellent qualities and vertues into herbs, and other creatures, serving for the cure of diseases, and for the preservation and restoring of health to the body of man, which are hidden and unknown, till they be found out by study and observation, and there is almost an infinite number of diseases that befall the body of man: the body of man is subject almost to innumerable diseases, which men of other trades and callings (in regard of employments) cannot know by their names, much lesse can they know the causes and nature of them: and therefore

Reason.

therefore it is needfull that some men set themselves apart to study the Art of Physicke, that they may know the vertues of hearbs, and other things that serve for Medicine, and may be able wisely to apply them, either simply, or in composition, and that they may know the naturall causes of diseases, their continuall or intermitting courses, their symptomes, and crisis, the state and constitutions of mens bodies: and many use medicines, either to prevent, or to remove diseases accordingly: and so the skill of Physicke being of such excellent use, it must needs follow, that the profession of that faculty is a lawfull and commendable course of life.

And therefore for use of this; First it must teach us to esteeme of good and wholesome Physicke, as a blessing of God, and of needfull use at somtimes, and not (as the fashion of some is) to contemne it as a thing altogether needlesse, and unprofitable; some are so wilfully averse in this kind, as sometimes, they sticke not to say, they will rather die than take Physicke: but let such know, they are guilty of the neglect of an excellent ordinance of God, and a meanes that he hath appointed for the preservation of health, and life, which we are bound to preserve, by all possible good meanes: for this temporary life is a precious Jewell, it is given us that in it we might use all good meanes to attaine to life and salvation, it is the time of grace and salvation: and as the Preacher saith, Eccles. 6. verf. 4. *Whoever is joynted to all the living, hath hope: for it is better to be a living Dogge, than a dead Lion.* And if a man die in his finnes, all hope of repentance is gone, and he cannot redeeme it with the price of a thousand worlds.

That which some use to object against the use of Physicke, is not worth answering:

That some who use Physicke are not better for it, but many times the worse, and therefore they will use none at all.

For by the same reason they might reject the use of meat and drinke. Doe we not see that some thrive not, but even pine away in the midst of plenty, and variety of wholesome meates and drinckes? Common experience shewes it, shall any thereupon wilfully refuse the use of meat and drinke? No, no, every man may see, that is but a foolish cavill: and the case is alike in the use of Physicke. We are therefore to esteeme Physicke as a good meanes the Lord hath appointed for the recovery of health, in time of sicknesse, and to use it in time of need carefully, and with good conscience, leaving the issue and blessing to the Lord.

And that we may use Physicke with a good conscience and looke for a blessing on it; three things must be remembred.

1. First, that the medicines we use be lawfull, such as have in them a naturall power and vertue to cure a bodily disease: not charmes, or spels, or amulets, and the like, which have no power, either by creation, or by any ordinance of God to that purpose.

2. Secondly, that we use good medicines, onely as meanes, not trusting in them as able to doe us any good of themselves, without Gods blessing on them; King Ase commended in Scripture for many other things, is yet blamed for this, 2 Chron. 16. 12. *That he trusted to the Physicians.*

3. And thirdly, that we use good Physicke and medicines, with prayer, ever calling upon God for the pardon of our finnes, yea, rather desiring the pardon of our finnes, than the release of our paines: and intreating the Lord for a blessing unto our Physicke, for the remooving of our disease, and the restoring of health unto us, if it be his good will and pleasure: and if thus wee use Physicke in time of need, we shall finde it profitable, and comfortable, and a meanes of restoring health to us, if the Lord see it meet for his glory, and our good.

And for further use of this point, is it so, that wholesome Physicke for the

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body

Vse. I.

Good and wholesome Physicke is to be esteemed as a blessing of God, and of needfull use at somtimes.

Note.

Object.

Answer.

Three things to be remembred in the use of Physicke.

Vse. 2

Wee are more
to esteeme of
the physicke
for our soules,
than of the
physicke for
our bodies.
Few are skill-
full Physitians
for their soules

body is a thing of excellent use, and so to be esteemed of us? Surely, then much more are wee to esteeme of the Physicke for our soules, of that physicke and those medicines that serve for the curing of the maladies, and diseases of our soules: and as every one is, or ought to bee a Physician for his owne body, so much more for his owne soule.

But alas, I must needes heere breake out into a complaint; Few there bee that have any understanding or skill, what thing is good for the healing of the infirmities and diseases of their soules, and (which is worse) most have little or no care to learne or remember such things, when they are told them, every one almost knowes what is good for his body, every one almost can say, oh, I have an hot liver, or a cold stomacke, a moist braine, or I am troubled with winde, and such like, and this is good for mee, and that is hurtfull, and this I will use, and that I will forbear; yea, if we heare it but once from the mouth of another, this is good for you, or that is hurtfull in regard of your infirmity, or disease: we ever after that, remember it, and wee can say, I heard such an one tell mee once, it may be 20. or 30 yeeres agoe, this is good for mee, and therefore this I will use, this is hurtfull for mee, and therefore I will forbear it: This I speake not against: this is lawfull: but let this shame us in regard of our ignorance and unskillfulness, and want of remembrance, touching things that are good against the infirmities, and diseases of our soules: wee seldome or never say, oh I have a windy minde, a mind full of nothing but ignorance, and vanity: my heart is much troubled with the lust of uncleanness, of pride, of covetousnesse, and such like; this is good for mee, and this I will use, and that is evill and hurtfull for mee, and I will refuse and avoide it. Nay, let a man tell us many times over what is good against the particular infirmity, or disease whereof our soules doe chiefly labour, and wee either take no notice of it, or wee remember it not.

For example, let us heare and that often, that a due consideration of the insufficiency of riches in themselves to do us good, that our excessive desire of them being satisfied, hath the curse of God attending on it: and that contentation, and the like, are meanes to cure that lust of covetousnesse that is in us.

Let us be told that a serious consideration of our own vilenesse and sin, a due consideration of Gods providence, that nothing befallus us but by his hand: that frequent and earnest prayer, and the like, are speciall meanes to bee used against the violent affection of unjust anger that takes place in us: and we either take no knowledge of these things, or we remember them not.

Thou wilt say, alas my memory is weak, and I cannot remember them.

Canst thou remember a thing once told thee for the good of thy body, and not that which is often repeated for the good of thy soule? blame not thy memory, there is another thing in thee blame worthy, and that is this: thou favour'st the things of the flesh, and thy whole study and care is for the good of thy body, and thou hast little or no care for the good of thy soule: and hence it is that thou dost take notice, and remember things told thee for the good of thy body, though thou hearest them but once, and not things often spoken for the good of thy soule.

Well, art thou able to see and discern the particular infirmity of thy body? Dost thou know and remember it once told thee, what is good, or what is hurtfull in regard of that infirmity? And dost thou use the one and forbear the other accordingly? Oh then let this shame thee if thou be ignorant, or unskillfull touching the infirmity of thy soule: or remembering not things often told thee that are good against the same, and for the curing of that infirmity: as thou art a Physician in some sort for thine owne body, which is commendable; so much more bee thou a Physician for thy soule: spie out the disease of thy soule, and if thou knowest the speciall infirmity, or diseases of thy soule, bee it

Object.
Answer.

it one, or more, labour also to know what may serve for the cure of it, and if once thou heare of that which may doe thee good for that disease, lay it up, and remember it, and make use of it, as occasion is offered. And in as much as thy soule is farre more excellent than thy body, so have thou a greater care of the health and soundnesse of that, than of thy body.

The Apostle adds (*beloved*) signifying that *Luke* was such a Physician, as for his pietie, and religion, and for his Christian carriage in his calling, was singularly beloved of the Apostle, and of all true beleevers that knew him. I spake of this Epithite before, verse 7. I will onely adde thus much in a word.

That according to the example of *Luke*, wee are to carry our selves in our personall and particular calling, as we may justly gaine love from those, with whom we have to deale: that we may justly and truly be called (*being Physicians*) beloved Physicians: being Marchants, beloved Marchants: & such like: and that we may so do, we must looke that in the practise of the works of our places and callings there be a practise of holinesse and love, that we shew forth holinesse towards God, and love to our brethren: and in the practise of the works of our particular callings, seek not our selves, our own profits and commodities, but the glory of God, and good of our brethren, and that we by love serve our brethren, as it is, Gal. 5. chapter, 13. verse. And if wee so doe, we shall (doubtlesse) winne the love of our brethren, and finde comfort in our owne hearts.

In the last place observe wee, that the Apostle concludes with *Demas*, that he also sent salutations to the Colossians, and hee onely names him, and sets no marke of honour upon him; And whence was this? Surely, the holy Ghost whose pen-man the Apostle was, seeing the hollownesse and hypocrisie of *Demas* (which afterwards brake out, & appeared in forsaking *Paul*, and imbracing this present world) would not vouchsafe him any title of commendation, though he deceived men, who made account of him in regard of the good profession he made for a time, and he was a companion to the Apostle: yet he could not deceive the holy Ghost, he saw his hollow heart and therefore would not give him any title of honour, more than this, that hee sent salutations to the Colossians, which a wretched worldling may easily doe.

Hence wee may gather: that howsoever dissembling hypocrites, may deceive men, and even good men may make account of them in regard of their outward profession, and admit them to bee their companions, as *Paul* did *Demas*, yet they cannot deceive the Lord: the Lord sees the deceit and hollownesse of their hearts, and though men make account of them, yet the Lord vouchsafes them no regard at all; no though they eate and drinke in his presence, though they come to the Table of the Lord, and heare him speake unto them in his word, and seeme to make an excellent profession, and goe so farre in that profession as that they come to knocke at heauen gates, and men cannot discern them: yet the Lord all that while sees them to be but hypocrites, and hath no respect unto them, and will then tell them, he knows them not whence they are, and say, *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity*, Luk. 13. 26, 27.

If then thou be a professour of religion, looke thou to the soundnesse of thy profession, thinke it not sufficient to come to the hearing of the word, and to the Table of the Lord, and to make a faire outward shew of religion, but looke there be soundnesse of religion in thine heart; for alas, what will it avails thee to make a goodly shew of religion, and to be highly esteemed for it among men, yea amongst good men, when notwithstanding the Lord sees thee to bee a dissembling hypocrite, and hath no regard unto thee? Remember this: thou maiest in a seeming shew of Religion goe so farre as to knocke at Heauen gates, and challenge the Lord to let thee in, and yet the Lord see thee to bee but an hypocrite, and then bee dismissed, and sent away with a *Nescio*, I know thee

Doct. 2.

Wee are so to carry our selves in our particular callings as wee may justly gaine love frō them with whom wee have to deale.

How this may be done,

Note.

thee not, depart from me thou worker of iniquitie; therefore as thou dost render the good of thine owne soule, looke to the soundnesse of thine heart, that religion be soundly rooted in thine heart, and that thou maiest with good conscience appeale to the Lord, as *David* did, *Psam.* 139. 1. and as *Jeremiah* did, *Iere.* 12. 3. and honour the Lord in thine heart as they did, and then (doubtlesse) the Lord will honour thee, hee will vouchsafe thee honour and good estimation in the world, at least in the hearts of his children, and of his mercy hee will crowne thee after this life is ended, with everlasting honour in the kingdom of Heaven.

Verse 15. *Salute the brethren which are of Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the Church which is in his house.*

The third
branch of the
Apostles con-
clusion.

IN this verse the Apostle comes to the third branch of his conclusion, which is laid downe in the 15. 16. and 17. verses, and it containes a setting downe of some speciall things, which he willed the Colossians to doe, and that they should cause to be done, both to the church of Laodicea, and to some particular persons.

In this verse he wisheth the Colossians to salute (from him) their neighbours, them of Laodicea, whom he stiles by the name of brethren, (*Salute the brethren which are of Laodicea*) and then more specially, one *Nymphas*, together with those that were in his house, whom he doth honour and dignifie with the title of a Church, (*and the Church which is in his house.*)

Let us cleere the words touching the sense and meaning of them. (*Salute the brethren.*)

Interpre-
tation.

The word (*brethren*) in Scripture hath many acceptions, sometimes it signifies such as are children of the same wombe, brethren by nature, as *Jacob* and *Esaue* were; sometimes men of the same blood, as *Abraham* and *Lot*, *Gen.* 12. 8. sometimes men of the same country: thus *Sauls* country-men are called his brethren, *1. Chr.* 12. 2. sometimes men of the same Religion: and thus the word (*brethren*) is usually taken in the New Testament, for such as being converted to the true faith of Christ, made open profession of that truth, and so it is heere to be taken, (*Salute the brethren which are of Laodicea*) that is, salute those at *Laodicea*, which are converted to the true faith, and make open profession of the faith, and Gospell of Christ (and *Nymphas* more especially, and the Church which is in his house. Some, by the Church in *Nymphas* his house, understand a congregation, or an assembly of Christians, which (say they) it may seeme, used to meet together in his house, to performe holy exercises of Religion, but (as I take it) that is not the meaning of the Apostle (so much being before implied in the word (*brethren*) even all the Christians generally that were of *Laodicea*) but by the Church in the house of *Nymphas*, we are to understand his Christian family, which was so well instructed in the true faith of the Gospell, and so godly and religious, as for the piety and good order observed in that family, there being the word read, instruction, consolation, prayer, singing of Psalmes, and such like holy exercises used, it was like to a little visible Church, or Congregation, in which there bee professors of true Religion, worshipping God in Christ according to his word, in the exercises of Religion.

Thus then are the words of this verse to be conceived, as if the Apostle had said:

Salute in my name, or from mee your neighbours, those at *Laodicea*, who being converted to the faith of the Gospell, make open profession of the same: and more specially *Nymphas*, and his Christian family, which for the piety and good order observed in the same, in the use of holy exercises, is even as a little visible Church, or congregation, in which there be professors of true religion, worship-

worshipping God according to his word in the exercises of religion.

Come we now to such instructions as this verse doth further offer unto us; and first in that the Apostle sent salutations from himselfe to them of Laodicea, which was a token and testimonie of his love towards them, and yet hee had never seen them, as appeares, cap. 2. r. onely note with me, this in a word.

That we are to love even those Christians we never saw, and to testifie and make knowne our love to them by all good meanes upon any just occasion that is offered. For why? they are members with us of the same body, and they are conjoynd with us by the same spirit, even by the Spirit of Christ: and therefore wee ought to love them, though wee have never scene them face to face, and to testifie our love by salutations, prayers, and the like, as any just occasion is offered.

And if thou have not a love to the members of Christ, wheresoever they be scattered on the face of the earth, and if thou doe not shew it forth by praying for them, as for thy selfe, and for thine owne familiar friends, and by other good meanes, it is an evidence and token thou art not a lively member of that body of Christ, as yet. This point I have heretofore handled, and therefore let it serve to have pointed at it in a word.

In the next place, wee are to marke, that the Apostle saluting them of Laodicea, that were professors of the true faith of Christ, he calls them brethren.

Whence we are taught thus much: That professors of the same true religion are in as neere relation one to another as naturall brethren: and are to be affected one to another, and to love one another, as brethren, such as professe the same true religion, are to hold themselves as brethren one to another, & to love as brethren; that is, to love one another heartily & mutually; for so doe naturall brethren, unlesse they degenerate & grow out of kind. We find it often in Scripture, that the professors of the same true faith, are stiled by the name of brethren, and stirred up to hearty and mutuall love, under the title of brethren, as Rom. chap. 12. vers. 10. *Be affected to love one another with brotherly love,* 1. Pet. 3. chap. 8. vers. *Love as brethren.* It is a knowne point (no doubt) in speculation, we have many times had occasion to speake of it, and therefore I will be brieve in it: and the ground of it, is also (doubtlesse) well knowne to us, it being the same with the ground of the love of naturall brethren, (namely) a conjunction and partaking in the same substance, seed, nourishment, &c. that as naturall brethren (coming of one line, having one father and mother, one bread to feed on) are moved by the teaching of nature to love one another: so true beleeving Christians (having the same God for their Father, the same Church for their mother, Christ their elder brother, being begotten of the same immortall seed, nourished with the same milke of the word, eating the same bread of the Sacrament, and looking for the same blessed inheritance) must needs by the teaching and worke of the Spirit be moved to love one another, as brethren, even heartily and mutually. And let this bee thought upon.

We all professe the same true faith and religion, and in that respect we are brethren, and let us bee stirred up to love one another, heartily and mutually, as brethren: and remember that (besides this) brotherly love is the badge and cognizance of our profession, by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John 13. 35. and is an undoubted pledge of our owne salvation, 1. John 3. 14. that brotherly love is a thing, not onely taught outwardly by precept, but inwardly taught and implanted in the hearts of all true beleevers by the spirit of God, as the Apostle saith plainly, 1. Thes. 4. 9. *touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you.* Why so? for ye are taught of God to love one another, as if he had said as naturall brethren (not degenerating and growing out of kind) are taught by nature to love one another:

Doct. 1.

We are to love those Christians we never saw and to testifie our love unto them by all good meanes.

Use.

Such as want love to the members of Christ wheresoever they be, cannot as yet assure themselves to be members of the body of Christ.

Doct. 2.

Professors of the same true religion are to hold themselves as brethren one to another, and to love one another as brethren, even heartily and mutually.

Use.

We that professe the same true faith, are to remember that in that respect we are brethren, and are to love one another as brethren.

Deadly hatred
of our bre-
thren, and the
fruits of it, are
the devils les-
sons.

so you to whom God hath given his holy Spirit, are taught by the Spirit of God, to love one another.

Now then hence reason thus with thy selfe; is brotherly love, a lesson taught by the spirit of God? who then is the teacher of deadly hatred? who puts into me swelling, and heart-burning against my brethren? who fills my mouth with bitter and venomous speeches against them? are these lessons taught by Gods spirit? no, no, hee is the God of peace and love, and these are the teachings of another spirit, even of that infernall spirit, the authour of confusion, the fower of all dissention among brethren, these are the teachings of the divell himselfe: thinke on this, whosoever thou art, that hast thine heart filled with poyson, even full of hatred and malice, and thy tongue bent to shoot out arrowes, even bitrer words against thy brethren, thou art so taught by the divell himselfe, he is thy instructor, and he is thy teacher: as many as are true beleevers, have learned another lesson, they are taught of God to love their brethren heartily and mutually: And if thou have not learned that lesson, thou art not taught of the Spirit of God: and if thou bee not taught of Gods Spirit, surely thou hast not his spirit, and if thou hast not his spirit, thou art none of his.

Let this then stirre up every one of us (seeing we professe the same true faith and religion, and so are brethren) to love one another with brotherly love: that so we may have testimonie to the comfort of our owne soules, that we (indeed) are true professours, knit together by one spirit, even the Spirit of God, and guided by the Spirit of God.

Now further observe we, that the Apostle having sent salutations to all the brethren in Laodicea generally, he salutes *Nymphas*, and his house particularly. *Nymphas* excelling others in piety and religion, is preferred by the holy ghost before the rest, and had in speciall remembrance by the Apostle: salute the brethren which are of Laodicea, and especially *Nymphas*, and his godly family. Whence we are given to understand.

That they that honour God, shall be honoured of him: yea, they according to the degree of honour which they give to the Lord, shall bee honoured of him: if any surpasse others in honouring the Lord, the Lord will also honour him above his fellowes. But on that I will not stand.

Let us rather consider the duty arising from hence, namely this:

That we ought to honour men more or lesse, according as they honour God, as the Apostle did here in particular salute *Nymphas*, he excelling others in piety, and thereby manifested a speciall regard and estimation that he had of him: so ought we to carry in our hearts a more speciall regard of those that excell others in piety and religion, and more especially to honour them, that above others doe honour and feare the Lord, Psal. 15. 4. it is made a note of him that shall dwell in the Lords tabernacle, that he *honoureth them that feare the Lord*, and Psal. 16. 3. *David* saith, his delight was in the Saints that were in the earth, and chiefly in the excellent, in those that did excell others in grace and holinesse; the reasons of this duty are manifest.

First, we are to carry in our hearts a reverent estimation of the image of God renewed in any whosoever, and according to the renovation of that image more or lesse in a measure of holinesse, we are more or lesse to honour them that are so renewed: now such as excell others in piety and religion, and in the feare of God, are (doubtlesse) more renewed according to Gods image, and therefore in more speciall manner are to be honoured of us.

Again, such as excell others in piety and religion, are in more speciall favour and regard with the Lord, and therefore are more to be esteemed of us. As amongst men, those are most honoured, that are in greatest favour with the Prince, so ought we to honour them most, that are in greatest favour with the Lord.

And

Dott. 3.

We are to honour men more or lesse, according as they honour God.

Reason.

Reason. 2.

And therefore (to make use of this) doest thou honour one man above another? doest thou carry in thine heart a more speciall regard of one above another? no doubt, every one doth so, when they compare man with man: looke then it bee according to the dutie now laid before thee, even in respect of this, that he excels others in pietie and religion.

Doe not thou according to the common course of the world, honour and esteeme one man better than another, in regard of his wealth or outward estate, because he is more wealthy, or of better estate in the world than others, that is not the rule by which thou art to bee guided in the preferring and honouring of one man above another: no, no, looke to his pietie and religion, and to the infallible tokens of Gods feare in his heart, and according to them, let him have place of honour and estimation in thine heart, and hee that excels others in pietie and religion, let him bee the man thou doest honour and esteeme above others, yea though it bee in an unequall comparison, in respect of outward condition: as haply one is a Magistrate, and another a private person: if the private person excell the Magistrate in pietie and religion, let him have the chiefe place of honour in thine heart. Howsoever (indeed) thou art to reverence the place and authoritie given unto Magistrates, and to honour and respect it with all due reverence and honour, and to submit thy selfe to it, even to the shedding of thy blood: yet in regard of pietie and religion, a private person going before a Magistrate, let him in that respect, have an higher place of honour in thine heart, than the Magistrate, and doe thou in honouring and preferring one man before another, in regard of pietie and religion, ever honour him most, that doth most honour God. And know for thy comfort, that that is a certaine evidence and prooffe, that thou lovest the honour of God, and that his honour is deare unto thee: in that thou not onely honourrest them that honour him, but thou dost honour them more or lesse according to the measure of honour which they yeeld to the Lord.

Now further in that the Apostle calls the Christian familie of *Nymphas* a Church, we see that a small number of the faithfull, even one familie may carry the name of a Church.

Why did the Apostle call the family of *Nymphas* a Church? It was because of the pietie of that family, and the good order observed in it, there being in it holy exercises of religion constantly used, as reading the word, instruction, prayer, singing of Psalmes, and the like: and thereby the whole family framed to pietie and religion, therefore it was that the Apostle called it a Church.

Hence we are taught thus much: that a family in which there is a constant use of holy exercises, as reading the word, prayer, and the like, and the people of that family thereby framed to holinesse and religion, is even a little visible Church: the teaching and religious ordering of a family, is so acceptable a thing to the Lord, as hee esteemes of such an house, as an holy assembly of his Saints.

And hence it is, that not onely here, but in other places also, the holy Ghost doth commend, and give the title of a Church to particular families. Rom. 16. 5. Greete the Church that is in their house, and 1. Cor. 16. 19. *Aquila and Priscilla* with the Church that is in their house. So likewise Philem. verf. 20. of that epistle is saluted, with the Church in his house. See then how pleasing a thing it is to the Lord, when a family is instructed, and religiously ordered: he makes account of that family, as of a little visible Church and Congregation.

How then ought this to stirre up masters and governours of families, to pra-
ctise that dutie of teaching and religious ordering of their families: for indeed it is the dutie of every master and governour of a familie, to teach and to instruct his family, and to pray with them in private, and not only to bring them

Vse.

In honouring one man above another, not wealth or outward estate, but pietie and religion are to be respected.

Note.

Note.

Doct. 4.

A family wherein there is a constant use of holy exercises, and the members of it thereby framed to holinesse and religion, is as a little visible Church.

Vse.

An excellent motive to stir up governours of families to a religious ordering of their families.

What a family
is, wherein
there is no re-
ligious order.

Another ex-
cellent motive
to stir up ma-
sters and go-
vernours of
families, to or-
der their fami-
lies religiously

to the publike assembly, and there to pray, and by all good meanes to frame them to holinesse and religion. And here is an excellent motive to stirre them up to the practice of that dutie: a family instructed and religiously ordered, is esteemed of the Lord as a little visible Church; and assembly of his Saints, and that is no small matter, for such a familie hath the blessing of God upon it, and his speciall protection over it: for the blessing of God is ever annexed to his true worship and feare, *Godlinesse hath the promises of this life, and of that that is to come*, 1. Tim. 4. 8.

Againe, consider what a family not instructed and religiously ordered is, surely, no better than a company of Atheists: for it is one propertie of the Atheist, not to call on God, Psal. 14. 4. and wee may see this true in common experience: looke into many families not instructed and religiously ordered, and what are they? like a little Church? nay surely, so farre out of order, as they are rather like to an hellish company, where the diuell himselfe sits as president: there is nothing but ignorance, worldlinesse, pride, wantonnesse, swearing, fighting, whoring, stealing, lying, and such like.

And yet further to excite and stirre up masters and governours of families, to the instructing and religious ordering of their families, consider what wee find, Genesis 18. 19. the Lord saith, vers. 17. *Shall I hide from Abraham what thing I doe*: as if he had said: no, no, I will not hide any thing from Abraham, for I know him, that he will command his sonnes, and his household after him, that they keepe the way of the Lord, to doe righteousness and judgement. See how the Lord liketh the carefulnesse of masters and governours to instruct their families: it is so pleasing unto him, as he will reveale his secrets to such as doe it, and hide nothing from them that may be for their comfort.

On the contrary, we may gather, that from such as are carelesse of this duty, he will hide his secrets, his counsels, and (without repentance) his comforts, and the light of his countenance for ever. So then, if thou that art a master of a family, dost desire that thy family may not bee a company of Atheists (among whom there is nothing but ignorance and all impietie) but rather as a little Church, and so esteemed of the Lord, having his blessing upon it, and his speciall protection over it: and if thou desire that the Lord may not hide his counsels from thee, but may reveale his secrets unto thee, and hide nothing from thee, that may be for thy comfort; then looke thou to the instruction and religious ordering of thy familie: resolve with good *Josua*, Josh. 24. vers. 15. *whatsoever others doe, yet thou and thine household will serve the Lord*: practice thou constantly the use of holy exercises of religion, private reading, praying, and the like: and then (doublesse) thou shalt finde, the Lord will esteeme of thy family, as of a little visible Church, and thou shalt finde his blessing upon thee, and upon thy family, and the Lord will reveale and make knowe to thee, whatsoever may bee for thy comfort.

Now to the sixteenth verse.

Vers. 16. *And when this Epistle is read of you, cause that it be read in the Church of the Laodiceans also, and that yee likewise read the Epistle (written) from Laodicea.*

IN this verse the Apostle goes on further, to enioyne two other things to be done by the Colossians:

As first, that they should cause this Epistle written and directed to them, to be read in the Church of Laodicea.

And hee tells them when they should so doe (namely) after themselves had read it: *And when this epistle (saith he) is read of you, cause that it be read in the Church of the Laodiceans also.*

Secondly,

Secondly, that they should in like sort, read the Epistle written from Laodicea: *And that ye likewise read the Epistle written from Laodicea.*

Touching the words of this verse, there is no great difficulty in them, save only in the last words of it concerning the Epistle written from Laodicea.

When this Epistle (that is) this letter, sent unto you, is read, *cause it* (that is) take order that it be read (in the Church) that is, in the publike assembly of the Laodiceans.

Now for that Epistle written from Laodicea there be divers opinions: some thinke it was an Epistle written from Paul to the Laodiceans, and of this opinion are the Papists, but that cannot stand with the words of the text, for the originall is *ἐκ*, not *πρὸς*, as it is rendred from Laodicea, not to Laodicea.

Now whereas they say, though it be from, not to the Laodiceans, yet that phrase doth not signifie, that the Epistle was written from Laodicea, but that the Colossians were to require and call for that Epistle from the Laodiceans: that it was an Epistle the Apostle had written unto the Laodiceans, and the Colossians were to require it at their hands, is but a shift, a glosse, and a needlesse adding to the text.

Some againe think, that the Epistle written from Laodicea, was the first Epistle of Paul to Timothy: indeed that Epistle hath such a post-script, that it was written from Laodicea, a chiefe cite of Phrygia Pacatiana, but that postscript is no part of Canonickall Scripture. And againe, it is cleere, chap. 2. 1. that when the Apostle writ this Epistle, he had not seene the Laodiceans: and therefore he could not mention any Epistle of his written from thence, hee having never been there.

A third opinion is, that the Epistle here spoken of, written from Laodicea, was an Epistle written to the Apostle, either from the whole Church of Laodicea, or from the Pastor of that Church: and (indeed) this opinion is most probable and most agreeable to the words of the text, without any addition or forcing at all: and it seemes, that Epistle written from Laodicea, was written to Paul touching some things to which hee makes answer in this Epistle to the Colossians, and therefore he willed the Colossians to read it, that they might the better understand upon what occasion he had written some things contained in this Epistle to them: and so taking that to be the meaning, that the Epistle written from Laodicea, was an Epistle, that either that whole Church, or the Pastor of that Church had written to Paul.

Come we to such points of instruction as this verse doth offer to us.

And first, observe we, that the Apostle would have his Epistle read both in the Church of the Colossians, and in the publike assembly of the Laodiceans: whence we may easily see, (I will but point at it.)

That we have warrant for the reading of this, and other Epistles of Paul, and of all other books of Scripture, in the publike assembly and congregation: we have here a plaine allowance given to it, that this Epistle, and other Epistles, and other bookes of the Scripture, may be, and (indeed) ought to be publike read, in the publike congregation, yea, the Church governours may, and ought to take order, that the books of holy Scripture be read in the publike meetings of the people of God.

And to this purpose the Apostle speaks more directly, and with farre greater vehemencie, 1. Thess. 5. 27. Hee there commands the governours of that Church in the name of the Lord to doe this duty, yea, he binds them to the doing of it, under paine of Gods heavy displeasure, denouncing his heavy wrath against them if they did it not (for so much the word signifies) I charge you, or I adjure you, in the name of the Lord, on paine of the Lords wrath, that this Epistle be read unto all the brethren, the Saints, to all the Christians that are members of your Church, in their publike meeting (a charge full of Power and

Aposto-

2

Interpre-
tation.

Doff. 1.
The Epistles
of Paul, and
other bookes
of Scripture
may, & ought
to be read in
the publike as-
sembly.

Vse 1.
The Papists
justly taxed in
that they for-
bid the rea-
ding of the
Scripture a-
mong the
people.

Vse 2.
We are not to
despise the
publike rea-
ding of the
Scripture.

Doct. 2.
The Epistles
of Paul, and
other bookes
of Scripture
doe not only
belong to
them to whom
they were par-
ticularly writ-
ten, but do in-
differently be-
long to all
Christians.

Apostolicall authoritie urging the governours of that Church to the doing of this dutie.

Now, how crosse and contrary to this, is the Church of Rome: that Church directly forbids the reading of the bookes of the Scripture among the people, at least the reading of them in a knowne tongue, which is all one, they strictly injoyne that no vulgar translation of Scripture be used, pretending (forsooth) that such translations are principall causes of error, and heresies: how farre are those men from the mind of the Apostle, who would have his Epistle to be read in the publike congregation, that even common Christians (no doubt) and all the faithfull people of God might be acquainted with them: but I leave them, and for the use of this to our selves.

Is it so that the Epistle of *Paul*, and other bookes of Scripture may, and ought to be read in the publike congregation? Let none of us then despise the publike reading of them: haply some have a conceit, that it is scarce lawfull for them to be present at the publike reading of the word, and therefore they purposely absent themselves till the exercise of preaching begin. If any so thinke, let them know, it is but a fancie. Act. 15. 21. it is said, that the bookes of *Moses* in the time of the Law were read in the Synagogues, and so (doubtlesse) may, and ought the bookes of *Moses*, and other Scriptures be now read in the publike congregation: and if Church-governours may and ought to take order for the reading of them, we also are bound to heare them so read.

Observe we in the next place that the Apostle would have this Epistle written and directed to the Colossians to be read in the Church of the Laodiceans, as needfull and profitable for them also.

Whence we are given to understand thus much: that howsoever this, and every other Epistle, and other bookes of Scripture be directed to some one Church or person: yet they belong to us, and to all the Church of God, as the common and publike treasure of them all. This Epistle of *Paul* to the Colossians, and other bookes of Scripture, doe not onely belong to them, to whom they were particularly written, but doe indifferently appertaine to all Christians: For why? (that we may not only affirme this, but prove it) as the Apostle saith, 2. Tim. 3. 16. *The whole Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable to teach, to improve, to correct, and to instruct in righteousness.* The Apostle, we see, there speakes not onely generally of the whole Scripture, but indefinitely in regard of the use of it, that it is profitable to teach, to improve, to correct, and to instruct in righteousness, not this or that Church, or person onely, but indefinitely all, and every one without exception: and to this agrees also that of the Apostle, Rom. 15. 4. *Whatsoever things were written afore time, were written for our learning, that wee through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.* Though indeed that place specially intend the old Testament, the writings of the Apostles being not then extant, yet it is true also of every part of the new Testament, because the Spirit is alwayes like it selfe: and therefore the new Testament being written by the same Spirit, is also written for our learning, as well as the old, and whatsoever things are written in the bookes of the old or new Testament, are written, and doe belong to us. Mark. 13. 37. saith our Saviour: *Those things that I say unto, I say unto all, as if he had said: My doctrine, and my exhortation is generall, though it be spoken and delivered to you, that are now my hearers: yet (indeed) it belongs to all, it concernes all men whosoever: and so (doubtlesse) wee may safely say, that howsoever the Epistles of Paul, and other bookes of Scripture be directed to some one particular Church, or person, yet indeed, that which is written to one Church, or person, belongs to all the Churches of God, and the doctrine and matter of them is indifferently belonging to all Christians.*

And the reason of it is this: The Epistles of *Paul*, and other bookes of Scripture,

ture, were by the will of God penned and committed to writing, that they might be for the generall good of Gods Church, that they might bee the foundation and pillar of true faith, as *John* saith, *Ioh. 20. 31. These things are written that ye might believe, that Iesus is the Christ the Sonne of God, and that in believing ye might have life through his name.*

And therefore howsoever this Epistle to the Colossians, and other Epistles, and other bookes of Scripture, be directed to particular Churches, or persons, yet they containe in them a perpetuall doctrine, and such matter as is common to all Christians, to the end of the world, and this being a cleere point:

First, it serves for answer to a foolish conceit of the Papists, and a fond objection they commonly make against our doctrine.

Oh (say they) your doctrine is not sound and good: and why so? Because (say they) it is not confirmed by miracles, you pretend (say they) that you are travelling towards heaven, and yet you know not whether you bee in the right way, or no, because you have no miracles, as it were letters or newes from heaven, from such as have gone in the way that you walke, to assure you that they are there arrived, and that you are in the right way, which is an absurd cavill. We may easie answer them, by the doctrine now delivered: for wee have miracles to confirme the truth we professe, in as much as the miracles of Christ and his Apostles are recorded in the written word of God, and being there recorded, they serve for confirmation of the truth of the Gospell, not onely then, when they were wrought, but for confirmation of the same truth to the end of the world: and so they belong to us also, in that our faith is the same that theirs was that did them: wee are not destitute of letters from heaven, having the Epistles of *Paul*, and other Apooles, which belong to us as well as to them, to whom they were particularly directed. Indeed we want such miracles, and such letters as are contained in popish legends, and Indian newes, which are meere delusions of Satan, and forgeries of men. But so long as by Scripture wee can justifie our doctrine, we have letters from heaven sufficient to assure us, that all that truly embrace the faith wee professe, being now departed this life, are safely arrived in the kingdome of heaven: and therefore it is but a cavill, to say we want miracles, and letters from heaven, to confirme our doctrine. But come we to the use of the doctrine that concernes our selves.

Is it so that the Epistles of *Paul*, and other bookes of Scripture, howsoever they be directed to particular Churches, yet the matter of them doth indifferently belong to all Christians? Let us then take notice of this, and learne wee, whensoever we heare the Epistles of *Paul*, and other bookes of Scripture read, or expounded, or wee our selves doe reade in them, then to thinke thus with our selves: surely that I now heare, or that I now reade, belongs to me, and I am to make use of it to my selfe: and though it bee directed to such a Church, or such a person, yet I am to take it as spoken to my selfe, it concernes mee to consider how this may profit mee, either for the information of my judgement, for my teaching in respect of some truth, or for the improving of some error that is in mee, or for the correction and reformation of some things amisse in my life and conversation, or for my further instructing, and my edification, and building up in hollesse, and comfort.

Doe thou whensoever thou either hearest, or readeest any part of the writings of holy Scripture, ever remember this, that the matter or doctrine of that place pertaines to thy selfe, and doe thou applie the severall threatnings, promises, and instructions of the word, thou hearest, or readeest, to thine owne estate particularly.

In this dutie many are exceeding short, and much defective: I might shew it in many particulars to instance but in one or two, the Apostle in this Epistle, chap. 3. 6. saith, that for fornication, uncleannesse, the inordinate affection, evill

cor. cu.

Reason.

Vse 1.

An answer to a foolish conceit and fond objection of the Papists.

Vse 2.

We are to make use of the bookes of Scripture either read or expounded to us particularly

Many are defective in this dutie.

concupiscence, and covetousnesse which is Idolatry, the wrath of God certainly comes on the children of disobedience. He saith againe, Ephes. 5. vers. 5. *That no whoremonger, neither uncleane person, nor covetous person which is an Idolater, hath any inhericance in the Kingdome of Christ, and of God.* He saith againe, 1. Cor. 6. 9. 10. *Neither fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor adulterers, nor wantons, nor buggerers, nor thieves, nor covetous persons, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, shall inheris the kingdome of God.*

Now consider it: doe men that are guilty of the finnes there reckoned up, when they heare, or reade those places, thinke they belong to themselves? Doe they apply them to themselves, and say within themselves, surely this is my state, my sinne is here touched, and this judgement is denounced against me? Doe they thus? No, no, nothing lesse: haply they thinke and will confesse the things there spoken, to be true (the vilest wretch that lives may so doe) but to thinke the truth of them belongs to themselves, they are farre from that: for if they did, how durst they still live and continue in their knowne finnes, against which such fearefull judgements are threatned.

Againe, the holy Ghost saith, Heb. 2. 2, 3. *If the word spoken by Angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be preached by the Lord, and afterward was confirmed to us by them that heard him?* The meaning is briefly this; if every transgression of the Law was severely punished, how shall we escape, if we doe but neglect the Gospell? Doe men that neglect the Gospell, such as, (howsoever they doe not blaspheme the Gospell as the Papists doe, and call the professors of it heretikes, yet they love it not as they ought, they delight not in it, they account it not most deare and precious unto them, and all things dung, and nothing worth in comparison of it?) doe such persons when they reade that place thinke it belongs to them, and that judgement is there threatned against them? No, no, no such matter, they thinke, that seeing they draw not their owne finnes after them, as it were with cart-ropes, as it is Isai. 5. 18. and they hate the knowne finnes of many, as adultery, murther, and the like, that therefore their neglect of the Gospell, their want of love unto it, is nothing, there is no judgement of God belongs to them. This without question is the conceit of many carnall Gospellers: and thus I might insist in many other particulars, and shew how we faile in this duty: we thinke not that the things we heare, or reade in the Scriptures, belong to us, and we apply not the severall threatnings of the word to our owne estate and condition, we must then learne whensoever we either heare or reade any part of the Scripture, to thinke thus with our selves: Surely this doctrine belongs to me, this promise is made to me, this threatning (I being guilty of that sinne, or the like) is denounced against me.

And to helpe us forward in this duty, consider we these two things.

First, if wee thus heare or reade the word of God, we shall make it truly profitable to our selves, we shall (through Gods blessing upon our reading and hearing) make the instructions and comforts of the word our owne: yea the threatnings of it will then be profitable unto us, for the avoyding of those sins against which, judgement is denounced.

Secondly, if we doe not thus heare or reade the word of God, we shall not onely strip our selves of the benefit of the instruction and comforts of it, and they shall be as the miracles of Christ among the Iewes, who saw them, but were not bettered by them: or as the word preached to the old world, Hebr. 4. 2. which profited them not, because it was not tempered with faith, we shall not onely doe this, but we shall one day find the threatnings of the word verified, and made good upon us, to our eternall woe and confusion.

If then thou dost desire that the word heard, or read by thee, may be truly profitable:

Two motives
to stirre up to
make use of
the word of
God, either
heard or read,
to our selves
particularly.

1

2

profitable: that the instructions, comforts, and threatnings of it, may be to thy good, and if thou wouldst not both strip thy selfe of the benefit of the instructions and comforts of it, and find the threatnings of it made good upon thy selfe, then learne thou whensoever thou dost either heare or reade it, to thinke, and be perswaded, the matter of of it belongs to thee in particular, and that thou art to make use of it according to the purpose and drift of it.

To omit that which the Papists gather from the last words of this verse, that seeing the Epistle of *Paul* to the *Laodiceans* is not to be found, therefore some part of the Scripture is lost, and that the Canonickall Scripture we have, is not sufficient without addition of unwritten traditions: that belong built but upon their owne mis-interpretation of the Text: the Apostle willed the *Colossians* to reade the Epistle written from *Laodicea*, no doubt, that they might better understand some things written in this Epistle, written to themselves.

Hence wee may gather, that wee may, and ought to reade other holy writings, besides the written Word of God, even such as may helpe us in the understanding of the Word.

The reason is plaine, such holy writings may serve for our edification: for if wee may be edified by the gracious speech of holy men, and furthered in grace and goodnesse by their holy life (as doubtlesse we may) then also may wee be edified by their holy writings, agreeing with the truth of Gods Word: and therefore take wee notice of it, that wee may, and ought to reade holy bookes written by men, and as wee are justly to be blamed for not reading the booke of God, the Bible: so also for not reading other holy bookes: for hereby that excuse that men commonly plead, is taken away, that the Scripture is hard to be understood, for why? thou hast not onely the benefit of the publike ministrie, but in this age many excellent bookes are put forth in print, that may helpe thee in the right understanding of the Word, and therefore if now thou be ignorant, thy ignorance is wilfull and affected, and thou art left voide of all excuse.

That we may and ought to reade other holy writings, besides the written Word of God.

Reason 1.

Men are blame-worthy for not reading holy bookes written by men.

Verse 17. *And say to Archippus, take heed to the ministry that thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it.*

IN this verse wee have another thing laide before us, which the Apostle willed the *Colossians* to doe, (namely this) that they should speake to *Archippus*, and hee tells them what they should say to him, what words they should use, and after what manner they should speake to him; as that they should speake by way of admonition, and warne him to take heed to the ministry hee had received in the Lord. (*And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry that thou hast received in the Lord.*)

In this warning or admonition we have more particularly these things to be considered.

1 First the matter of the admonition, in these words, *Take heed to the ministry that thou hast received in the Lord.*

2 Then the extent of that duty, how farre forth *Archippus* should take heed and looke to his ministry, (namely) so farre as that hee should fulfill it, *Take heed to the ministry that thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it.*

3 And thirdly, in the words of this admonition, the Apostle laies downe a strong and effectuall argument, to perswade *Archippus* to take heed to his ministry, taken from the Authour of his ministry, that hee had his ministry from the Lord: that hee had received it by his grace, and therefore hee should looke to it, and fulfill it. *Take heed to the ministry that thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it.*

And the occasion of this warning to be given by the *Colossians* to *Archippus*

P P P

chippus in all likelihood and probability, was this.

Archippus was a Minister in the Church of Colosse, and was a colleague, and fellow-helper in that Church of *Epaphras*, who was then at Rome with *Paul*, and therefore he ought in the absence of *Epaphras*, to have beene diligent in his ministry, which it seemes he was not, and therefore the Apostle would have him admonished, and put in mind of his duty.

Interpre-
tation.

I will therefore briefly lay forth the sense and meaning of this verse. (*And say to Archippus.*) that is, Admonish and warne *Archippus* on this manner, (*take heed to the ministry*) the originall is (*see to the ministry,*) the meaning is: carefully looke to the Office and Function, diligently weigh and consider, what it is, the weight of it, and what belongs to that pastorall duty, (*that thou hast received in the Lord*) that is, that thou hast received from the Lord, which he of his grace and mercy hath committed unto thee, (*that thou fulfill it.*) The word *fulfill* is metaphoricall, borrowed and taken from a vessell, that ought to be full of liquor, or the like matter, and is not; and the Apostle compare the ministry of *Archippus* to such a vessell, which had somewhat put into it, but was not filled to the brim, as it should have beene: and so when he saith, *that thou fulfill it*, it is as much as if hee had said, that thou fill up that vessell of thy ministry, as it ought to be filled, and leave no empty place in it: and his meaning is, that thou doe it not to the halfe, or in some part, and leave it undone in another: but that thou performe it, in every respect, as it ought to be performed, that thou accomplish and performe all the parts of that Office and Ministry. Thus then briefly conceive the Apostles meaning.

Admonish *Archippus* on this manner, Looke carefully, and diligently consider with thy selfe, what is that Office and Function, the weight of it, and what belongs to that pastorall duty, which thou hast received from the Lord, and which hee of his grace and mercy hath committed to thee, that thou performe it in every respect, as it ought to be performed, that thou leave nothing undone in that office that ought to be done, but that thou accomplish it in all the parts of it.

Now first, it is not to be passed by without observation, that howsoever the Apostle in the verse before, enjoined the reading of his Epistle, that it should be read both in the Church of Colosse and of Laodicea, yet here hee addes that *Archippus* should be put in minde of his duty, that hee should be admonished to looke to the fulfilling of his ministry, that hee should be stirred up to diligent teaching of the Word amongst the Colossians.

Hence wee may gather. That howsoever this Epistle and other bookes of Scripture are to be read, yet the reading of them is not sufficient, it is not enough to reade the Word our selves, or to heare it read, (though that is to be done) but if wee will soundly profit by it, it must be taught, and wee must attend to teaching in the publike ministry.

For (indeed) the preaching of the Word is the ordinance of God, which hee hath ordained for the right understanding of the Word, as the *Eunuch* said, Act. 8. 31. and for the effectuall application of it, to the entering thorow, even unto the dividing asunder of the soule and the spirit, and of the joynts and the marrow, and to the discerning of the thoughts and intents of the heart, Heb. 4. 12. In reading, there is sometimes no understanding, sometimes mis-understanding, sometimes mis-applying the Word read, and all these wants are helped and supplied by preaching.

This I note in a word, against that selfe-pleasing conceit of some, who sooth up themselves in their neglect of the publike ministry of the Word.

Say they, we have the Bible, and in the Bible are the most perfect Sermons of Christ, and of his Apostles, and we can read them in our houses, and so serve God as well as they that heare all the Sermons in the world.

Indeed,

Doff. 2.
It is not enough to read the Word our selves, or to heare it read, but wee must also attend to the preaching of it in the publike ministry of it.

Vfe.
Reprooffe of such as neglect the publike ministry of the Word.
Object.

Indeed it is true, the Sermons of Christ and of his Apostles, are most perfect in themselves, but such persons must know, they are not so profitable to them, till they be explained, and applyed to their conscience in the ministry of the Word: admit they read the Word, (which may be justly doubted whether they doe or no) but grant that they doe, and they understand it, yet sel-dome or never doe they thoroughly apply it to themselves, especially if it touch to the quicke, (namely) their ownepleasing sinne. Commonly men that thus excuse their neglect of the publike ministry of the Word, are such as cannot abide to have their conscience ransackt, and ript up, and the secrets of their hearts made manifest by the ministration of the Word, as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 14. 25. they cannot endure that the sword of the Word should pierce them, and should be used to the cutting, and launching, and searching of the festered sores of their soules, by the hand of another: and is it likely they will so apply it themselves, that they (as it were) with their owne hands will use the word to the cutting, launching, and searching of their owne festered sores? No, no, there is no likelihood in it; and therefore it is but a vaine excuse to say they have the Bible at home, they can, and doe reade in the Bible: this is but a fond shift, and wee must know it is not enough for us to reade in the Bible, (though that is our duty to be diligent in reading it) yet that will not serve the turne, the application of the word is specially made in the publike ministration and preaching of it, and to that wee must attend: yea, though wee have knowledge, and (haply) know as much as the Preacher can teach us, yet still must wee attend upon it: for the preaching of the Word, serves not onely for the information of the judgement, but for the framing of the will and affections to holinesse, and for the stirring of us up to the practice of that wee know: and in this respect must every one attend to the publike ministration and preaching of the Word.

Note wee further, that the Apostle here willed the Colossians to admonish their minister *Archippus* (as it may seeme) somewhat slacke in his duty, to be more diligent in performance of this duty; wee see then though Ministers of the Word have great authority over the Church committed unto them by the Lord: yet notwithstanding, if they be negligent in doing their duty, they may be stirred up to a greater care in doing their duty by the same Church, and by the Governours of it may be put in minde of their duty, and reprov'd, if they deserve reproofe: their places doe not exempt them from other mens charitable oversight and carefull admonition. Yet such admonition must be used with reverence and due regard, even with regard had to their Pastour, as one sent to them from the Lord for their good. It is the Apostles rule, 1 Tim. 5. 1. *Rebuke not an Elder, but reprove him as a Father*; the reproofe of an Elder must be a submissive and reverent exhortation of him, but I will not further insist on that.

Come wee to the admonition it selfe, which the Apostle willed the Colossians to use to *Archippus* their Minister: say to him (saith the Apostle) *take heed to the ministry thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it*. Where first wee are to marke: the Apostle bids the Colossians, not barely to say to *Archippus*, fulfill thy ministry, but that they should say to him, take heed to it, that thou fulfill it diligently, consider thy ministration, what it is, the weight of it, and that thou fulfill it.

Where in the first place wee are given to understand: That a Minister of the Word ought diligently and carefully to consider his ministry: there must be in the Minister of the Word, a diligent and due consideration of his office and calling, what it is, and the weight of it; a Minister must duly and seriously consider, what he is called unto, even to be the messenger and Embassadour of the Lord, to carry his message, and ambassage to his people, and to intreat of

The place of a Minister doth not exempt him from other mens charitable oversight, and carefull admonition. How such admonition must be used.

Doct. 3.

A Minister of the Word ought diligently and carefully to consider his ministry.

conditions of peace betweene God and his people, and to stand in Christ his stead, 2 Cor. 5. 20. to be Gods interpreter to the people, and the peoples to God, Iob 33. 23. and hee is to consider the weight of his calling, that he is put in trust with the soules of men, yea, the soules of men purchased with so great a price, as the most precious blood of the onely begotten Sonne of God, Act. 20. 28. and that hee is put in trust with the holy worship of God, and with his holy name (as it were) with his crowne and dignitie, and with the dispensation and disposing of his secrets; 1 Cor. chap. 4. vers. 1. and that it belongs to him, to teach, to improve, to correct, to instruct, to exhort, to comfort, to watch, to pray, to goe in and out before Gods people unblameably: these and many other like, are the things that every Minister of the Word ought to thinke on, to consider and to have an eye to at all times.

Vse.

Reproofe of
such Ministers
as consider not
the weight of
their calling.

Civill gover-
nours in pub-
like or in pri-
vate, are to
consider the
weight of their
office and
calling.

A duty wherein many Ministers are farre short, and much defective; some Ministers full little thinke on it, that they are called to be the messengers of God, to deliver his message to his people; if they did, they would not then deliver their owne inventions unto them: and many have little consideration of it, that they are put in trust with Gods people, and that the weight of their soules doth lie upon them: their idlenesse, their negligence, their frothy and unprofitable teaching, plainly shewes it.

I might insist in many other particulars but for more generall use of the point, consider wee, what the Apostle saith, Rom. 13. 4. that even such as are deputed of the Lord to a place of civill government, are called Ministers of God, they have an office and a ministry. Now then, as there must be in a Minister of the Word a due consideration of his Office and Function, what it is, and the weight of it: so doubtlesse ought there to be in civill governours, in publike or in private (be it but a master of a Family) even such persons ought to see to their ministry and office, and to consider what it is, what belongs to it, and what is the weight of it: they are seriously to consider with themselves, that they are deputed of the Lord to that office, and that they are in his place, and stand in his stead, to those that are under them, and that it belongs to their office, according to their power, to protect the innocent, to punish the offender, to encourage the well-doer, and to discountenance and censure the evill-doer, and so to guide and governe those under them, as may be for the good of their bodies and soules: yea, men that have an office or function, are to consider what belongs to that office in particular: as, a master of a family is seriously to consider, that it belongs to him to command things lawfull to such as be under him, and proportionable to his strength: to provide for them (as hee is able) meate, drinke, and all things needfull: to yeeld them moderate rest and recreation: to teach, to admonish, to correct them as just occasion is offered, to pray with them, to pray for them, and the like; and every one that hath an office, either publike or private, is to consider the weight of that office, how much, and how deeply it concernes him, to doe the duties that belong to that office, and that the doing of them so neerely concernes him, as if hee neglect them, and any under him offend, and sinne, through his default; that sinne of the inferiour shall increase the judgement of the superiour in the day of account. Exod. chap. 16, vers. 27. It is said that some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather Manna, but found none; whereupon it is said, vers. 28. that the Lord reproved Moses and said unto him, *How long refuse ye to keepe my Commandements and my Lawes?* Now Moses had not prophaned the Sabbath, but the people, and not all, but some of the people, yet the Lord reproved Moses because the people that were under his charge had sinned: so weighty a burthen lies on those that have any way the oversight of others, that they must give an account in regard of their sinnes, if they offend through their default, and neglect of duty; and thus ought such as have any office

or

or function publike or private diligently to weigh and consider with themselves, what that office is, what belongs unto the weight of it. Thus no doubt, did Salomon, when he made that prayer unto the Lord, 1 King. 3. 9. *Give to thy servant an understanding heart, that I may discern between good and bad:* and he doth expresse as much in the last words of the verse, *For who is able to judge this thy mighty people?* as if he had said, I consider the weight of mine office, and I finde it great and weighty: therefore, Oh Lord, I beseech thee strengthen me and enable me to doe my duty; and to this purpose (no doubt) was that wholesome admonition of Iehoshaphat to his Iudges, 2 Chron. 19. 6, 7. *Take heed what ye doe: for ye execute not the judgement of man, but of the Lord, and hee will be with you, in the cause and judgement. Wherefore now let the feare of the Lord be upon you, take heed and doe it: for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, neither respect of persons, nor receiving of reward.* As if he had said, diligently consider with your selves, what office yee are called to, what is the charge that lies upon you, what belongs to your office, you execute not the judgement of men, but of the Lord, and hee will be with you in the cause and judgement. And consider with your selves, your charge is so weighty, that you must one day give an account of it before the Iudge of all the world, with whom is neither respect of persons nor receiving reward.

Thus are such as have any office or charge over others, be it publike, or private, duly to consider that office and charge, what it is, what belongs unto it, and the weight of it. Now, doe men that have charge over others consider these things? Doe they (as they ought) thinke on it, what the office and place is which they are called to, what belongs unto it, and the weight of it? Few there be that doe so. Many men are altogether carelesse, they set all at sixe and seven, have no manner of consideration what their office and charge is, and what belongs unto it; and most men have an eye, not to their office and charge, and what belongs to that, but to the example of others: they consider what other men of like place doe, and they doe the like: such and such masters, (saith one that is a master of a family) neither teach their family, nor pray with them, and they thrive well enough, and therefore thinkes hee, I may doe the like; others againe, consider onely what is to be done in their place and calling, standing best with their ease, their profit, and their credit in the world: thus and many other waies doe men faile in this duty. Well, know thou whosoever thou art, thou art to take heed, and to see to thine office, and to consider seriously what it is, what belongs unto it, and the weight of it. And that thou magist so doe, learne thy duty (what belongs to thine office and calling) out of the Word of God, Deut. 17. 19. the King is enjoyned to read the Word of God, all the daies of his life, that thence he may learne his duty, and in the Word of God, the Lord hath laid downe the offices and duties of all sorts of callings, of Magistrates, Ministers, masters, particularly, to that end (without question) that they should learne, know, and consider them; doe thou therefore thence learne the things that concerne thine office, and (knowing those things) consider them, and have an eye to them at all times.

And to that purpose, remember these two things:

1. First, it is for want of taking heed to the duties of mens callings, and want of consideration of them, that men transgresse their callings, and goe beyond the bounds of their callings, and so lay themselves open to the plagues and judgements of God: no doubt it was so with *Parah* in putting his hand to the Arke, 2 Sam. 6. 8; and the Lord smote him for it. And it was for want of consideration of his calling, that *Pear* would warme himselfe at the high Priests fire, Luke 22. 55. It cost him the breach of his conscience, and as one saith well, if wee marke the time when the judgement of God befall men, wee shall finde they are cast upon them when they are out of their callings.

Civill governours justly reprov'd for not considering the weight of their office and calling.

Two things are to be thought upon by such as be civill governours.

Nota.

2 Again, remember this, that the want of consideration of their callings, and the weight of them, is that which makes men carelesse and unconscionable in doing their duties: for what makes men, either neglect the duties of their callings, or doe them onely for fashion? Surely this, they pull away their eyes from their callings, they looke not (as they ought) to the duties of them, and on the weight of them, but they cast their eyes to the example of others, on their owne ease, profit, or estimation in the world, and thence it comes, that they are carelesse and unconscionable in doing the duties of their callings.

If then thou wouldst not goe beyond the limits of thy calling, and so lay thy selfe naked and open to the judgements of God, if thou wouldst not be carelesse and unconscionable in doing the duties of thy calling, but rather doe them with care, and good conscience, and with comfort to thine owne soule: then doe thou consider thine office, and calling, take thou heede, and have an eye to the duties of it, and to the weight of it: ever meditate and thinke thus with thy selfe: this is mine office and calling, these are the duties that belong to it, and they are of this weight, and consequence, that the neglect or carelesse doing of them will bring downe Gods judgements upon mee, and I shall one day answer for the same. Let this be thy meditation and consideration in respect of thy place and calling, whatsoever it is.

In the next place wee are to marke that the Apostle bidsthe Colossians say to *Archippus*, take heede to the ministry that thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it, using as we shewed, a word taken from a vessell that ought to be full, and is not, meaning this: that *Archippus* should (as it were) fill up the vessell of his ministry, that hee should (as hee had begun to doe something in his ministerie) so accomplish it to the full in every respect, and leave no part or duty of it unfulfilled, or unperformed.

Doct. 3.
It is not enough for a Minister of the Gospell to performe one part of his office alone, but he must execute and fulfill all and every part of his office.

Where wee may easily see thus much laid before us: that it is not enough for a Minister of the Word, to beginne, and to continue doing something that belongs to him in his place and calling, but hee must accomplish and performe all things that pertaine to him in the same: it is not sufficient for a Minister of the Gospell to take paines in one part of his office alone, as in teaching onely, exhorting onely, or that hee live free from all speciall scandall or offence: but hee must execute, and fulfill all and every part of his office and ministry, hee must teach, improve, correct, instruct, exhort, comfort, &c. as any occasion is offered unto him; and hee must watch over his people, and goe in and out before them unblameably, and so carry himselfe in the discharge of his ministerie, as it may truly be said of him, that hee fills up the vessell of his ministerie, and so performes his duty in every respect, as there can be no further duty required of him, as he is a Minister.

And this is further taught plainly, 2 Thes. vers. 4. where the Apostle having laid downe the speciall duties that belong to a Minister of the Word, with a weighty charge, pressing *Timothy* to the practice of them: *I charge thee before God, and before the Lord Iesus Christ, which shall judge the quicke and the dead at his appearing, and in his Kingdome: preach the Word, be instant in season and out of season, improve, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering, and doctrine:* he addes, vers. 5. *Doe the worke of an Evangelist: make thy ministry fully knowne:* as if he had said, These are the duties that belong to thee in thy ministry, and thinke it not sufficient to doe some of them, and leave the rest undone, but doe them all and every one, fulfill thy ministry, and make it fully knowne.

I might easily insist further on this point, and for the use of it I might hereby taxe and reprove many Ministers of the Word, some being altogether carelesse, such as labour not in any part of their ministry, either in the teaching or living unblameably, and so are farre from labouring in every part of it.

Some

Reproofe of Ministers altogether carelesse of their duty, and of such also as doe their duty but in part.

Some againe, labouring in some duties of the ministerie, and not in all, as (haply) teaching, but not exhorting, or exhorting without ground of doctrine, or teaching and exhorting well, but living ill, and giving just cause of scandall and offence, or living in good order without touch of any notorious crime, yea (haply) shewing forth some vertues, as mercy, love, piety towards the poore, and such as want helpe, but not able to teach and to doe the most needfull duty of their place and calling. These, and many other waies I might shew, how some Ministers of the Word faile in not fulfilling their ministerie; they leave, as it were, an emptinesse in that vessell, they fill it not up, as it ought to be filled, they performe it not in every respect as it ought to be performed: but to extend the point a litle further, and that upon the ground before delivered, Rom. 14. that such as be in place of civill government, publike or private, have a ministerie given them of God: as therefore the ministry of the Word must not hold it enough for him to labour in some duties of his ministerie, and leave the rest undone (that is to fill his ministry but in part, and not to fulfill it) and if hee will fulfill his ministerie, it must be by doing all the duties that belong to that office.

So (doubtlesse) ought it to be with such as have any other place or office in publike or in private, they must not content themselves in doing of some duties that belong to that place, and leave the rest undone (that is to leave a gap, and an empty place in their office and place) but they must fill it up in the execution and performance of all and every part and dutie of the same: for why? Every man in his place and lawfull calling whatsoever it be, is to be faithfull: wee find it given to *Moses* by the Lord himselfe in way of commendation, Numb. 12. verse 7. *That hee was faithfull in his office*: and to *Christ* himselfe, Hebr. 3. 2. and it is the Apostles rule, Rom. 12. 7. *Let every man that hath an office attend on it with diligence and faithfulness*. Now a man is not faithfull, if hee doe some duties that belong to his place and calling (though hee doe them with great diligence and paines) and leave other duties of it undone: therefore in every place and calling, there must be a performance of all and every duty belonging to the same.

Againe, all and every duty of every lawfull calling are enjoyned by the commandement of the Lord, and men are as strictly bound by the commandement of God, to the doing of one part of their office, as another, successively and at times fit for the doing of it: and therefore men must not content themselves with the doing of some duties that belong to their place and calling, but they must performe, and doe all and every dutie of it: that is the fulfilling of their office and their ministerie.

Now this is a thing litle thought on by most men in the world: most men content themselves in the doing of some duties that belong to them in their place and calling, though they neglect others: yea, some exceedingly please themselves in this, that they are diligent and painfull in doing only some things that concern them in their particular office and calling.

To instance but in one or two particulars: Some parents (it may be) suffer their children to want nothing belonging to their bodies: they give them meate, drinke, and clothing, and provide all outward things needfull for them: yea, sometimes they make themselves drudges to scrape up abundance of wealth for them against after-times, and yet all this while neglect that duty laid upon them, Eph. 4. 6. of bringing up their children in instruction and information of the Lord, that dutie they performe not: and so some masters (haply) lay no more on their servants than they are able to doe: they provide for them wholesome and sufficient meate and drinke, and in season, and they give them leave to refresh themselves at times convenient; but as for the dutie of teaching and instructing them, and praying for them, those things are

Such as be in any place of civill government must fulfill their office, executing and doing all and every part and duty of the same.

Reproofe of such as rest in the doing of some of the duties of their place and calling, and neglect others

not though upon : and yet such parents and such masters please themselves in that which they doe, and thinke they have done that which concernes them towards their children and servants : yea, sometimes they sticke not to say it, they have done the part of parents and masters : sometimes such masters say to their children, wee have spared from our owne backs and bellies for you, wee have fasted hardly, and gone thinly clad for you, and wee have laboured night and day for your good &c. and such masters say to their servants, what can you complaine of? have you not had your meate and drinke wholesome and good, and your wages paid you? have we laid too much upon you? &c. Thus many parents and masters content themselves in doing onely some things that concernes them as they are parents and masters, and thinke that in so doing, they have discharged their office : but know thou whosoever thou art, thou being a father or a master, it is not enough for thee to doe some duties, but thou must doe all that concernes thee in that place and calling, thou must fulfill thine office, and leave nothing undone that ought to be done.

Doct. 4.

A motive to stirre up men to fulfill their office in any place or calling.

And to this purpose, consider that every duty in thy place and calling, more neerely concernes thy selfe, than those to whom it ought to be performed : for the doing of it may bring good to them, but much more good and comfort to thy selfe, in testifying thy faith, and sealing up comfort to thine owne conscience : and the neglect of it may hinder their good, but it makes thee liable to the judgement of God, and deeper condemnation : and therefore looke thou fulfill thine office. Alas, will some say, I am not able to fulfill it, and to doe all the duties that belongs to mine office, I am not able to teach my family. Art thou not? that is thy shame, labour that thou maist be able, and according to that ability thou hast, performe that dutie, and know for thy comfort, the Lord requires not the fulfilling of thine office, in doing the duties of it in perfect measure, that is impossible. It is but a conceit of the Papists, that men regenerate may fulfill the Law of God in the time of this life, and may doe more than they are commanded, even workes of supererogation : that is but a fancie : doe thou therefore all and every duty of thy place and calling : and though thou doe some of them in weaknesse and much infirmity, yet the Lord will not cast away those duties so performed, if thou doe them in truth and sincerity of heart, but will accept them in Christ, and let that be thy comfort.

Now touching the argument the Apostle would have to be used to perswade *Archippus* to take heed to his ministry, and to the fulfilling of it, in that he would have him stirred up thereto, because hee had received it from the Lord, that the Lord of his grace and goodnesse had committed that office to him, it is easie to be concluded from hence :

That it is a notable and very effectfull argument to stirre up a Minister of the Gospell to a carefull and comfortable performance of his dutie, in that hee hath received his ministry from the Lord, in that the Lord of his grace and mercy hath reputed him faithfull, and put him in that office, as the Apostle saith, 1 Tim. 1. 12. It is a very powerfull and prevailing argument to stirre up a Minister of the Gospell, to be diligent, carefull, faithfull, and zealous in fulfilling his ministerie, yet, it serve notably to comfort him against the stormes and persecutions that are or may be raised against him in doing his duty.

For hee having received his ministry from the Lord, hee knowes the Lords arme is long and strong enough both to sustaine and uphold him, and to render vengeance to those that shall unjustly disturbe him. These things might be further stood on, but let it suffice to have named them. Now here a question is to be answered, namely this.

How shall a Minister of the Word, know that he hath received his ministerie from the Lord, and that the Lord hath put him in that office?

Answer. By three things.

First,

In that a Minister of the Gospell hath received his ministry from the Lord, it is of great weight to perswade him to a carefull performance of his duty.

Reason.

Quest.

Answer.

First, if the Lord have given him a competent measure of gifts fit for the worke of his ministry.

Secondly, if hee upon triall and examination being fit for that office, be designed to it by the Governours of the Church.

Thirdly, if (he exercising those gifts bestowed upon him and faithfully discharging his duty) the Lord give a blessing unto his labours.

By these shall a Minister know that hee hath received his ministry from the Lord.

They of the separation, say our Ministers are no true Ministers: why so? Forsooth onely because they are not rightly called (as they suppose) by men.

They cannot deny, but that many of them are sufficiently qualified with gifts fit for the ministry: and that exercising those gifts, the Lord gives blessing to their labours in the true conversion of many soules to God. But (say they) they are not rightly called by men, and therefore no true Ministers. Admit this to be true (which they are never able to prove) shall an error and failing in men, make void the calling of God? Grant this, that there is some defect in the manner of their calling by men, for that is all that they stand upon, yet they having a competent measure of gifts fit for the ministerie, and exercising those gifts by allowance from men that are in place and authority, and the Lord vouchsafing a blessing upon their labours, it is a sufficient approbation of their calling. Oh, but they would have the consent of the people in calling of Ministers: who sees not their consent, in as much as they willingly submit themselves to their ministry, and are effectually wrought upon by it, to their calling and conversion: yea, therein the Lord doth (as it were) set his hand and seale to their ministry, and approve it.

A false teacher may convert others (this is said by them, but they are not able to prove it.)

No surely, if this were true, then the argument of the Apostle was not good, whereby he proved himselfe a true Apostle, 1 Cor. 9. 1, 2. *Am I not an Apostle, am I not free? have I not seen Iesus Christ our Lord? are ye not my worke in the Lord? If I be not an Apostle unto others, yet doubtlesse I am unto you, for ye are the seale of mine Apostleship in the Lord.* The question was, whether hee were a true Apostle or no: how doth he prove it? surely thus. That hee was the instrument and means of their conversion, and therefore a true Apostle. Now if it were so, that a false teacher might convert soules, they might have said, this is no good argument: but the Apostle knew well they could not so reply, hee knew his argument to be sound and good: and if it was a good argument to prove *Paul* a true Apostle, then much more is it a good argument to prove an ordinari Minister, a true Minister, and called of God, that the Lord give a blessing to his labours for the conversion of soules. From this argument (*then hast received in the Lord*) wee may further gather:

That in every office and lawfull calling that men hold in Church or Commonwealth, they are to have an eye to the Lord, and to remember that they have received it from him: that the Lord of his grace and goodnesse hath vouchsafed to set them in that place and calling, be it never so meane: and if it be place of greater eminencie and dignitie, men are the more to looke up to the Lord, and to consider the greatnesse of Gods Grace in that their advancement.

Thus did *Paul*, Rom. 12. 3. *I say through the grace that is given unto me.* And 1 Cor. 15. 10. *By the grace of God, I am what I am.* And hence it is that the Lord is wont to set out the greatnesse of the sinne of men in high place, with the advancement hee had vouchsafed them. Thus he set out the sinne of *Jeroboam*, of *Saul*, yea, of *David* himselfe, 2 Sam. 12. 7. *I have anointed thee King over Israel,*

1

2

3

Object.

Answer.

Object.

Answer.

Object.

Answer.

Doff. 5.

In every lawfull calling, wherein men are, they must remember that they have received it from the Lord.

Use.

Men having
an eye to the
Lord, from
whom they
have received
their places
and callings,
it makes them
contented and
thankfull, and
humble, and
faithfull, and
conscienceable,
in discharging
their duties.

Israel, and deliver thee out of the hand of Saul, &c. And this is of excellent use and speciall consequence: if men in any place and callings, to which they are lawfully called, ever look up to the Lord, and remember that he of his grace and goodnesse hath brought them to that place: doubtlesse, it will make men content with it, be it never so meane, and if it be a place of great eminency, thankfull to God for his mercy: and it will make them walke humbly in that place, yea, faithfull and conscienceable in doing the duties of it, knowing that as they have received it from the Lord, so one day an account of it is to be made to him. Kings and other great men, may make their under-officers, but wee must remember that the offices themselves are from the Lord: and though the Prince may give thee an office, yet hee cannot give thee a *quietus est* for thy unfaithfulness in that office, that is above his power: therefore ever look thou to the Lord, from whom thou hast received thine office, and thus thinke with thy selfe: surely the Lord of his goodnesse and grace hath brought mee to this office: hee ordained it before all times, that I should have this office: he hath chosen out my fathers house (haply) base and obscure, and mee the meaneest of my brethren: hee hath prepared a way and meane for mee, to come to this place, in my judgement, weake and unlikely, and hee hath prevailed over many great lets and impediments that stood up against mee, and hath put mee into this place and office. Thus thinke with thy selfe, and thus consider the grace and goodnesse of the Lord in bringing thee to that place thou now holdest, and thou shalt finde, it will be a notable meane to make thee contented with thy place, and thankfull to God for it, and humble in thy selfe, and faithfull and conscienceable in doing the duties of it.

Verf. 18. *The salutation by the hand of me Paul: Remember my bands. Grace be with you, Amen.*

The shutting
up of this
Epistle.

Interpre-
tation.

In this verse wee have the closing or shutting up of this Epistle, and the Apostle shuts it up both with his owne salutations to the Colossians, and thus not written by the hand of the Secretary (as the other were) but with his owne hand, *The salutation by the hand of me Paul:* and with his prayer to God for them, that the grace of God might be with them, (*Grace be with you*) to which is added the usuall word commonly subjoynd to Petitions made to the Lord (*Amen*.) And betweene these two, betweene the Apostles salutation and prayer, is inserted and interlaced a short precept, that they should be mindfull of him, and remember his bands. I will first cleare the words of this verse, touching the sense and meaning of them: *The salutation by the hand of me Paul:* that is, I Paul salute you under mine owne hand: or, I Paul send salutations to you written with mine owne hand. (*Remember my bands*.) By bands wee are to understand his imprisonment, which hee suffered for the Gospell of Christ: and the Apostle would have the Colossians mindfull of his imprisonment in praying for him, and in making use of his suffering for the Gospell to themselves: that they should both commend him to God in their prayers, and pray to the Lord to give him patience, strength, and constancy in his troubles, to stand fast in defence of the Gospell, and to give him whatsoever his prisoners estate might stand in need of: and that they should make use of his patient and constant suffering for the truth of the Gospell to themselves, and thereby themselves be more confirmed in the truth of the Gospell, and encouraged to beare the like troubles for it, if they should be called unto it. (*Grace be with you*.) that is, the free and undeserfed love and favour of God in Christ, with all the fruits and tokens of it, be with you. (*Amen*.) The word *Amen* being here added to the Apostles Petition, it signifies his wish and desire that hee prayed for, and it is also a testifying of his assurance to obtaine that which hee prayed for: for that

that is the use of the Word (*Amos*) at the end and shutting up of prayer, and so it is as much as if hee had said, so be it, I wish it so, I doe fully beleeeve it shall be so, I assure my selfe that the Lord in his good time, will grant my request. Thus then are wee to conceive the Apostles meaning in the words of this verse, as if hee had said:

I Paul, send salutations to you written with mine owne hand, and I would have you mindfull of my imprisonment, both in praying to God for mee, that hee would give mee patience, strength, and constancy in my troubles, to stand fast in the defence of the Gospel, and that hee would give mee whatsoever my prisoner estate standeth in neede of, and in making use of my suffering for the truth, thereby the more to confirme you in the truth of the Gospel, and to encourage you to beare the like troubles, if you be called to them. And the free and undeserved love of God in Christ, with all the fruits and tokens of it, be with you: so I wish and desire, and doe fully beleeeve and assure my selfe it shall be so.

Come we now to speake of the things here laid before us, in that order they are propounded by the holy Ghost; and first of the Apostles owne salutation sent to the Colossians: hee sent salutations from himselfe to the Colossians (no doubt) as a token of his true and unfained love to them.

The point from hence offered, that wee in like sort may salute others, and thereby testifie our love unto them, I have already handled, and therefore I passe by it, and the thing wee are especially to marke in these words is this, that the Apostle sent his owne salutations to the Colossians, written not by the hand of his Secretary, as the foregoing salutations were, but with his owne hand. Now what might be the reason of this? (for thence wee shall gather the doctrine) the reason of it is given by the Apostle himselfe, 2 Thel. 3. 17. where hee thus writes, *The salutation of mee Paul, with mine owne hand, which is the token in every Epistle, so I write: as if hee had said, I send salutations unto you written with mine owne hand, and in this manner of writing, written in these characters, and after this forme of letters (so I write) as a token and certaine marke that I use in every Epistle of mine, whereby men may know them to be (indeed) my Epistles, and that they come from mee, and are not counterfeit.*

Wee see then the reason why the Apostle here writ salutations to the Colossians with his owne hand: it was this, to prevent the danger of counterfeit Epistles that might passe under his name, that all might know by that his hand-writing, that it was *Pauls* owne Epistle, and not one foisted and thrust in, in stead of his.

Hence we may easily gather thus much: that it is an ancient sleight of Satan, and his instruments, to thrust upon the Church (if possible he may) forged and counterfeit writings in stead of true, thereby to corrupt Religion, and to deceive the people of God: It is an old stratagem, and trick of the Divell (if he can) to foist into the Church, bastard-writings, under the names of Apostles, and other ancient writers, thereby to spread many errors, and for the corrupting of sound and wholesome doctrine.

Thus it was in the Apostles time, and therefore hee writ salutations with his owne hand, to prevent the danger of counterfeit writings: yea, this further appeares, 2 Thel. 2. 2. where hee doth beseech them of that Church, by the coming of our Lord Iesus Christ, and by their assembling unto him, that they should not be suddenly moved from their minde, nor troubled, neither by Spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from him and the other Apostles: as if he had said, there be some that carry about countefeit letters under my name: but be not you suddenly moved from your minde by such letters, bearing my Name, or the name of some other Apostle.

And

Doff. 1.

It is an old sleight of Satan and his instruments (if they can) to thrust upon the Church forged and counterfeit writings in stead of true, to corrupt Religion, and to deceive Gods people.

Use. 1.

We are not to be troubled at this that many popish Canons, Decrees, and Determinations are fathered upon Apostles, Fathers, and Councils.

Use 3.

It is needfull there should be some infallible markes by which men should know Scripture to be Canonically.

The Popish note and mark of Canonically Scripture.

Notes.

True and infallible marks and notes of Canonically Scripture.

And this being so in ancient times, even in the time of the Apostles, wee are not to marvell at it in times succeeding, especially in the daies of Arianisme, and when hee was in his ruffe. Wee are not then to thinke it strange, that then many counterfeit writings were thrust upon the Church, and wee must know: it is of no force, and nothing worth, which is commonly in the mouths of our adversaries the Papists [these are the Canons of the Apostles, these are the Decrees of the Fathers, these are the Determinations of Councils] for many times such Canons, Decrees, and Determinations, carrying the names of Apostles, Fathers, and Councils, if they be duly examined, prove no better than the idle dreames of fat-bellied Monks: wee finde many counterfeit writings fathered on men of ancient times, which (indeede) were never knowne to them, yea from this sleight of the diuell came those forged Gospels of *Nicodemus*, of *Thomas*, of *Bartholomew*, the Acts of *Abdias*, and many counterfeit Epistles, as that to *Laodicea*, &c.

Now then, for further use of this to our selves.

Seeing it is so, hence it followes, that it is needfull there should be some markes by which men may know Scripture to be true Canonically Scripture: there must needes be some infallible notes by which the writings of the Prophets and Apostles, may be discerned, and distinguished from all other writings of men whatsoever, and whereby men may be certified and assured that they are the writings of the Prophets and Apostles, and so indeede the true Word of God.

Now what be these markes, may some say? If the Papists answer this question, they will tell you: the marke by which we may know Scripture to be true Canonically Scripture, is the testimony and tradition of the Church, because the Church saith so: and is it the tradition of the Church, that these and these are the writings of the Prophets and Apostles: and therefore wee know them to be so. But this cannot be an infallible note and marke whereby wee may know Scripture to be Scripture, because the authority of the Church is inferior to the Scripture, the excellency and authority of Scripture being above all men and Angells, as appears, Gal. 1. 8. Therefore the Church cannot authorize the Word of God, and certainly assure men, this is Scripture, this is not. The ministry of the Church may induce and move men to assent to the Scripture, but it cannot authorize it, in the minde and conscience of any: no, no, there be other infallible notes and markes, by which wee may know Scripture to be Scripture, and those perpetuall, as namely:

- 1 The evidence of the Spirit imprinted in the Scripture, and shewing it selfe in every line of it.
- 2 The purity and perfection of Scripture.
- 3 The consent of one part with another.
- 4 The antiquity of it.
- 5 The majesty of it in plainnesse of speech.
- 6 The power of it over the conscience.
- 7 The wonderfull effect of it: the Gospell being contrary to mans corrupt nature, yet hath it in all ages wonne men to it.
- 8 The certaine prophecies of things to come, which none but God could foretell.
- 9 The admirable preservation of it against time and tyrants.
- 10 The diavells rage against them that follow it.
- 11 The judgements of God, that have befallen such as opposed it.
- 12 The constant sufferings of many millions that have shed their blood for the Gospell of Christ.

These, and many other the like, are notes and markes whereby wee may discern, and certainly know the writings of the Prophets and Apostles to be their writings,

writings, and may distinguish them from all other writings whatsoever.

And touching these, and the like infallible notes of Scripture, we must finde them so to our selves, they must be means to settle our consciences, and to assure us that the Canonick bookes of the old and new Testament, are (indeed) the word of God.

It is to be feared, if the Lord should suffer Religion to be altered with the time, that many amongst us would be found unsettled touching this point, and would be ready to yeeld consent to any counterfeite writings in stead of the Scripture, time of tryall may come we know not how soone; therefore labour thou to be sealed in this assurance, that the Canonick writings of the Prophets and the Apostles are indeed the word of the eternall God, and never rest till thou be thereunto perswaded by the evidence of the Spirit imprinted in them, and by the purity, perfection, majesty, power, and spirituall grace, appearing in them, yea, never rest till thou finde that Spirit and grace powerfull in thine owne heart, and then undoubtedly, though never a man in the world acknowledge Scripture to be Scripture, yet thy heart seasoned with grace, will make thy mouth confesse it.

And so much of the Apostles salutation written with his owne hand.

Now to this precept (*Remember my bonds*) be mindfull of my imprisonment in praying for me, and in making use of it your selves.

Where first we may observe, that the Apostle did not dissolutely cast off the care of his owne estate, he was not secure, as presuming upon his strength in time of his trouble, but himselfe begged of God continually, and he requested the Church also to beg for him, whatsoever should be needfull for him in that estate.

Whence we learne thus much, I will but name it.

That Gods children should be farre from carnall security, and confidence in their strength and wisdom in the time of their trouble and affliction; Gods children should be farre from presuming and lifting up themselves, in regard of their strength in time of tryall, by sickness, imprisonment, or the like, they should then be instant with the Lord in prayer themselves, for strength, patience, and comfort, and all graces needfull, and also intreate others to be mindfull of them in prayers to that purpose in time of trouble and tryall, even the best and dearest of Gods children have need of other mens helpe by their prayers to recommend them to God, craving for them, strength, and patience, and comfort.

It is an easie matter to see and acknowledge Gods mercy, and good providence in time of health, peace, and plenty, and to rest contented therewith. But it is hard to the best to doe it in time of trouble, and affliction, and to quiet themselves with Gods disposing hand in the day of trouble, sickness, or any other distress is no easie matter for the best of Gods children: and therefore then they are to call upon God for strength, patience, and comfort themselves, and to entreat others to doe the like for them.

This point I further handled verf. 3. And therefore I passe by it, and come to consider the precept it selfe, (*Remember my bonds.*)

Where we are plainly taught this duty. That we are to take knowledge of the afflictions of our brethren, and to be mindfull of them, yea, so mindfull of them, as we reach out our helping hand to them by prayer, by comfort or otherwise, as occasion shall be offered unto us.

And this is further most plainly taught, Heb. 13. 3. *Remember (saith the author of that Epistle) them that are in bonds, as though ye were bound with them: and them that are in affliction, as if ye were also afflicted in the body.* If our selves were in prison, or any way afflicted, without question, we would be so mindfull of our selves, and we would earnestly call upon God for ease, comfort, release and deliverance, and we would use all good means we were able, to relieve

We are to bee perswaded that the bookes of the old and new Testament are the word of God.

Nota.

Doct. 2.
Gods children should be far from carnall security in their strength and wisdom in time of their affliction.

Vs.
Gods children are to seeke to God for strength, power and comfort in time of their trouble.

Doct. 3.
We are to take notice of the afflictions of our brethren.

our selves, so ought we to doe to our brethren in time of their affliction, even to pray for their ease, comfort and deliverance, and to comfort and helpe them, as if we were in their stead.

The reason and ground of this we finde, 1. Cor. 12. 26. *We are members of one body, and therefore should have a feeling of the hurt one of another, and be touched with it:* yea, so touched, as that we should be carefull for the good of one another. We have often had occasion to speake of this point, yet it cannot too often be remembred, it is a duty wherein we are much defective: it was the complaint of the Prophet Amos 6. 4. 5. 6. that men in his time did lie on their beds, and stretch themselves on their beds, and eate the lambes of the flocke, and calves out of the stall; they sung to the sound of the Violl, they did invent to themselves instruments of musick like *David*: They dranke wine in bowles, and anoynted themselves with the chiefe ointment, but no man was sorry for the affliction of *Ioseph* no man remembred the affliction of their brethren: and this complaint may justly be taken up against many in these daies, that enjoy health, wealth, liberty and plenty of all things, and they passe their time in feasting and jollity, and have little or no remembrance, at least no feeling remembrance of the afflictions of their poore brethren. Well, know thou whosoever thou art, this is thy duty, thou enjoying health and prosperity, thou art to have in thee a feeling remembrance of the miseries of others. We have a notable example in *Daniel*, though he himselfe was in great honour preferred above all the Princes of Persia, and second to the King, yet when he saw the captivity of Gods people still continued, and the people of God still oppressed by the heathen, his heart was heavy, his soule melted within him, and he humbled his soule with fasting, *Daniel* 9. 3. so if thou see or heare that the people of God, or any one of Gods children are in bonds, or any way afflicted, thy selfe enjoying liberty and freedom from the like affliction, and having cause of rejoycing for thy prosperity, thy heart ought to be resolved into sorrow for their affliction, and to be touched with a feeling of it, and thou art to expresse thy sorrow by prayers and teares, and to reach out thy helping hand unto them as occasion shall be offered unto thee, and know thus much, that if thine heart be so taken up, with the consideration of thine owne prosperity, that sorrow for the affliction of others cannot enter into it, yea such sorrow as will breake out into prayers and teares, certainly thy heart is not right within thee.

One thing yet remaines which is offered unto us from this precept (remember my bonds) the Apostle would have the Colossians remember his bonds by making use of them to themselves, for their owne confirmation in the trueth of the Gospel: the point from hence is this:

Other mens sufferings of the Gospel seene or heard of by us, should become profitable to us, they should make us more firmly cleave to the trueth of the Gospel, more soundly to professe it, yea, whereby we should be the more moved to renounce the vanities of the world, from which we are called by the voyce of the Gospel.

And consider we but thus much, have and doe the Saints of God suffer much for the profession of the Gospel; yea, have holy Martyrs endured extreame torments, and shed their blood for the trueth of the Gospel? and cannot or doe not these things seene or heard of, move thee to leave the vanities of the world, and more soundly and sincerely to profess the trueth of the Gospel? surely then thou hast not profited by the consideration of their sufferings as thou oughtest, and one day the suffering of the Saints, and the blood of the Martyrs shall rise up in judgement against thee: see more of this, chap. 1. 24.

Come we to the Apostles prayer, with which he shuts up his Epistle, i. being (indeed) the last words of his Epistle (grace be with you) his meaning (as before

V^{se}.

Iust reproofe of those who enjoying many goodthings passe their time in jollity and forget the affliction of their poore brethren.

We are to profit by the afflictions of others that are known to us. How we are to profit by them.

before wee shewed) in this prayer is thus much: the free and undeserved love and favour of God in Christ, with all the fruites and tokens of it bee with you, so I wish, and I doe fully beleve, it shall be so. It may be some may desire for the better understanding of this prayer, to be informed more particularly what be those fruites, and what bee those tokens of Gods free and undeserved love in Christ: let them know in a word, that the fruites of it are all spirituall blessings, as the Apostle calls them, Ephes 1.3. wherewith the Lord doth blesse his chosen in Christ, belonging to their eternall life and salvation, as (namely) remission of sinnes, Justification, adoption, sanctification, &c. And the tokens of that free and undeserved love of God in Christ are these: the holy means of salvation vouchsafed and made effectually to Gods chosen by the operation of his Spirit: the sense and feeling of Grace in their hearts: temporall good things rightly and purely used: One grace or good thing taken away from them, and supplied by another vouchsafed unto them: affliction sanctified and made profitable to them, and the like. And so this prayer of the Apostle (Grace be with you) comprehends a desire of much good to the Colossians. And thus (more fully understanding the words) come wee to the matter of instruction hence offered; and first in that the Apostle concludes with this petition only, (Grace be with you) in that hee wisheth to the Colossians no other good thing but this, that Gods free grace and love might be with them, we may easily gather thus much.

That nothing is more excellent, or more to be wished for than the grace of God in Christ: the free and undeserved favour of God in Christ, with the fruits and tokens of it, is to be desired and sought after as the chiefest good thing and above all things whatsoever.

We have a notable example to this purpose in *David*, *Psal.* 4. 6 7. there be many that say, Who will shew us any good? but Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon us. Thou hast given mee more joy of heart than they have had, when their wheat and wine did abound: as if he had said, let others in the world desire, and seeke after what they will, as riches, pleasures, honours, and the like, my chiefe desire is of the grace and favour of the Lord, Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon mee, therein stands my chiefe joy and comfort, yea I find more true joy and comfort in that, than in the increase of corn and wine, and in all the riches of the world. Thus also stood *Paul* affected, *Phil.* 3. 8. he counted all things but losse, for the excellent knowledge sake of Christ Jesus his Lord, for whom I have counted all things losse, and doe judge them to be dung, that I might winne Christ, vers. 9. and that hee might bee found in Christ, and so in the favour of God through him. And there be many reasons of this, why the grace and favour of God in Christ, should bee desired and sought after above all other things.

First, the grace and favour of God in Christ is proper and peculiar to Gods children: riches and outward good things are common to them with the wicked.

Secondly, the grace and favour of God in Christ is the root and ground of all good things profitable and comfortable in this life, and in the life to come, it doth intitle us to all the comforts and good things of this life, and of the life to come: there is no good thing belonging to this life or the life to come, that comes from any other cause or ground, but from the grace and favour of God in Christ: without that wee have no title to the least blessing or good thing whatsoever, no not the least crumme of bread.

And thirdly, the grace and favour of God in Christ, is that alone which doth season and sweeten all the outward things of this life, and makes them truly comfortable, and indeed blessings unto us, without which they are but an heap of miseries, and (as the Preacher speaks in the booke of Ecclesiastes) accursed vanities and bitter vexations of spirit, given to make men more inexcusable,

**The fruites of
Gods free love
and favour in
Christ.**

Doct. 5.
Nothing is more to be desired and sought after than the free grace and favour of God in Christ.

Reason. 1.

Use. 1.

Our hearts are to be affected with the excellency of Gods grace & favour in Christ.

and to plunge them into deeper condemnation.

These reasons doe sufficiently cleare it, that the grace and favour of God in Christ is to be desired and sought after above all other things, and let not this bee a matter of speculation, a matter of knowledge onely: Let us not onely know it, that the grace and favour of God in Christ is a most excellent thing, but let the consideration of the excellencie of it affect our hearts and soules, and make us breathe and seeke after it above all things in the world: it is the common course of most in the world, to toyle and moyle, to trudge up and downe night and day, farre and neere, seeking after wealth, honour, pleasures, preferment, &c. but as for the favour of God in Christ, they regard it not, they have little or no care to finde any assurance of that at all. Well, wee must not onely be able to speake of the grace and favour of God in Christ, and to commend it, and say, oh it is better worth than all the riches in the world: but the excellency of it must stirre us up to desire it, and to spend both time & strength in seeking after it above all other things: and this wee shall never doe till wee find our selves to stand in need of it, we must find our selves to stand in extreme need of Gods grace and favour in Christ.

Haply some will say, is there any that thinks hee stands not in need of Gods grace and favour in Christ?

Indeed every one in generall termes will say he is a sinner, and will confesse that hee stands in neede of Gods grace in Christ, but yet many finde not themselves to stand in extreame need of it, and that may thus appeare: doe not many in the world account great finnes, little finnes, and little finnes no finnes at all? doe they not esteeme Sabbath breaking, customary swearing, idle and foolish talking, petty trifling finnes? and if they be reprov'd for these finnes, bee not their answers ready? doe you make this so great a matter, a little working in the morning on the Sabbath, selling of a trifle on that day, now and then swearing and jesting a little? why, this is nothing, I pray God I never doe worse, and then I hope I shall doe well enough, and as for such as make conscience of these things, and carefully seeke after assurance of Gods grace and favour in Christ: doe they not load them with odious and reprochfull nick-names, calling them puritans, hypocrites, dissemblers, and the like? Now what bee these things (I beseech you) but plaine evidences, and demonstrations, that howsoever many say they are sinners, and they stand in neede of Gods grace in Christ, yet they thinke they stand not in so great need of it as indeed they doe? Labour we therefore to finde our selves to stand in extreame need of the grace of God in Christ, and to find our selves (without that) in a most miserable case, in respect of the least of our finnes: and finding our great need of Gods grace in Christ, let us hunger and thirst after it, above all things in the world, and bee stirred up carefully to use the meanes that serve to worke and increase assurance of Gods grace and favour towards us, and to seale it up in our hearts, as namely, frequent and diligent hearing, reading, meditating in the word of God, prayer, use of the Sacrament, and the like, and yet further to stirre us up to affect the grace of God in Christ, and to seeke after it above all other things, consider these things.

Two motives to stirre us up to affect Gods grace in Christ and to seek after it above all other things.

1 First, if a man be as wealthy as ever was *Salomon*, so that gold be as plentifull with him as chips or stones in the street, and he enjoyes that wealth all his life, which is very uncertaine, as *Job* saith, 18. 15. Brimstone is scattered on the house of the wicked, it is no matter for Gods vengeance: if the fire of Gods wrath but touch it, it kindles presently and consumes all: but suppose he enjoy his wealth for the space of fourescore yeeres, or an hundred yeeres, yet if hee want the grace of God in Christ, hee is sure to have hell for ever, and hee that loseth his soule for the gaine of all the world, hath but a miserable bargain.

2 Again, consider we that it is not all the wealth in the world that can doe

us any good in time of distresse of conscience, and in the pangs of death; no, no, when a man is galled with the gripes of a guilty conscience, it is not all the world (if it were his) that can purchase the least dramme of that comfort Gods children finde in their sealed apprehension of Gods favour towards them: and it is onely that, that will minister comfort in time of distresse of minde, and in the houre of death, and therefore learne thou to prize the grace of God in Christ as it ought to be prized, and let thy heart be set on it as the most excellent thing in the world: Labour to see thy selfe stand in extreame need of it, hunger and thirst after it, and seeke for it above all things, and never rest seeking till thou finde some assurance that it belongs to thee.

And that thou be not deceived, remember the tokens of it before spoken of: Never rest till thou finde the holy meanes of salvation powerfull unto thee to thy true conversion, and to the working of grace in thee, and that thou hast some feeling of grace in thine heart: and that if the Lord give thee temporall good things, thou hast also power to use them aright, and doest use them purely, with prayer, and to right ends; not to riot, pride, and to wantonnesse, but to the glory of God, and to the good of thy selfe, and others: and that if the Lord take away some good things from thee, he supplies it another way; as if he take from thee health, wealth, or the like, yet he makes supply, by giving thee patience, and contentment: and that if thou be afflicted, thy afflictions are sanctified unto thee, and thou art made better by them: and if thou finde these and the like tokens, comfort thy selfe, and assure thy selfe, Gods grace and favour in Christ belongs to thee; and howsoever these, and the like tokens and signes of Gods grace, and the sense of it in thine heart, may be lost for a time, yet Gods favour it selfe can never be lost, but when all other things faile thee, that will stand by thee, and continue with thee for ever.

In the next place note we in a word, that our Apostle begun with his wish of grace, to the Colossians, Chap. 1. 2. *Grace be with you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Iesus Christ*: and here he ends with the same wish, *Grace be with you*.

Teaching us thus much; That the free grace of God is the beginning and the end of all: it is all in all in the matter of our salvation. And this may be easily further confirmed, for why? Election is of grace, Rom. 11. 5. Vocation is of grace, 2. Tim. 1. 9. Iustification is freely by grace, Rom. 3. 24. Faith is of grace, Ephes. 2. 8. Eternall life and salvation is of grace, Rom. 6. 23. And all being thus of grace, where then is any place for mans merit, that our adversaries the Papists, hold and maintaine? Certainly Gods free grace and mans merit cannot stand together; if all be of grace, there can be no workes of preparation, meriting *ex congruo* (as they speake) nor any worke meriting *ex condigno*, these be but dreames, and devices of idle braines.

I leave them, and come to the last word, (*Amen*) In which the Apostle, as we shewed, signifies his desire of the things he prayed for, and testifies his assurance to obtaine them. Touching desire in prayer, I have heretofore spoken. Now concerning assurance of obtaining things prayed for, signified in this word (*Amen*) know thus much.

That we must come to the Lord in prayer, with assurance to be heard, wee must be able to say Amen to our prayers: assent and affiance of heart must goe with the request of our lips made to the Lord: we must by faith rest on God, for the accomplishment of the things wee have heartily desired. Matke 11. 24. Saith Christ, whatsoever yee desire when ye pray, beleve that yee shall have it, and it shall be done unto you. Iam. 1. 6. But let him aske in faith, and waver not.

And that we erre not touching this point, know that our faith, in prayer must rest on the promise of God, and must beleve the Lord will grant the things wee

Note.

Dott. 6.

Gods free grace is all in all in the matter of salvation

Faith in praier must rest on Gods promise.

we pray for, as he hath promised them, the good things of this life, if the giving of them be for his glory, and our good, and spirituall good things absolutely. Thus must our faith in prayer have relation to Gods promise.

Object.

Some may object, that faith in prayer is not alwayes needfull: for God sometimes heares unbelievers, Psal. 107. *David shewes at large, that when men are in distresse, and misery, both beleevers and unbelievers: they cry unto the Lord, and he delivers them out of their distresse; he gives there many instances, therefore it may seeme that faith is not alwayes necessary in prayer, to make it acceptable with God.*

Answer.

Answer: God doth sometimes relieve the oppressed, and heare their groans and cries, though they be unbelievers, not because their prayers do please him, and are acceptable to him, but for the execution of his justice upon such as wrong them. Iam. 5. 4. *Behold the hire of the labourers which have reaped your fields (which is of you kept backe by fraud) crieth, and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the eares of the Lord of hostes.* It is thence cleere, that oppression, and defrauding of the poore, be crying sinnes, and the cries of the oppressed bring downe Gods vengeance on their oppressours: God doth sometimes heare the cries and complaints of unbelievers, regarding their cause (namely) their wrongs, and oppressions, not their persons, or prayers: and this he doth for two causes.

Two causes
why God
sometimes hea-
reth the cries
of unbelievers

1. First, to set forth the greatnesse of his mercy, that reacheth even to unbelievers: as he suffers the Sun to shine, and the raine to fall on the just and on the unjust, Math. 5. 45. so he doth not contemne the teares of them whose cause is just, and calls for judgement, though themselves be wicked.

2. Secondly, God sometimes heares the complaints, of unbelievers, regarding their cause, not their persons, or prayers: thereby to stirre up true beleevers to call on him more earnestly, when they see that even the cries and the teares of the wicked are not fruitlesse: it is a notable inducement to stirre up true beleevers to be earnest in prayer.

Gods mercy
to unbelievers
considered,
must stir up
true beleevers
to come to the
Lord in the
prayer of faith

And let the consideration of it, stirre thee up that art a true beleever, even to come to the Lord in the prayer of faith. Doth the Lord sometimes heare the cries and complaints of unbelievers, which have no promise made unto them? Then doe thou remember the promise of God made to thee, and rest upon it by faith, according to the tenour of it, say Amen to thy prayers: Let the assent and affiance of thy heart goe together with thy voice, and then undoubtedly the Lord according to his promise, will heare and grant thy request.

From the word *Amen*, some object on this manner.

Object.

Say, they, it is an Hebrew word, and so a word of a tongue unknowne to the common sort, and yet it is used by them in prayer; why then may we not use many words of an unknowne tongue, and a whole prayer in an unknowne tongue?

Answer.

Answer: Though the word (*Amen*) be a word of an unknowne tongue, yet by use it is become as familiar as any other English word, and therefore this makes nothing for the defence of Popish prayer in an unknowne tongue.

Soli Deo gloria.

Amen.

FINIS.





A

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